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ABSTRACT

Written by experts in the field of folklore for laymen, this three-part volume is intended to help teachers of English, social studies, mathematics and science, home economics, the arts, and other subject areas to become more knowledgeable about folklore and to inject this knowledge into their existing curricula. The first part, on introducing folklore, deals with defining folklore, folklore genres, finding folklore, and the folk cultural approach (putting folklore in context). The second part explores folklore in relation to the subjects of English and the language arts, history and social studies, domestic life, and mathematics and science. The third part, on folklore and issues in education, discusses making sense out of contemporary phenomena, using local resources, and cultural diversity and folklore. Suggested classroom exercises are provided. Appendixes contain an article on identifying folk art in one's community, a selected bibliography on Indiana folklore, an article on preserving artifacts, and an index. (EL)

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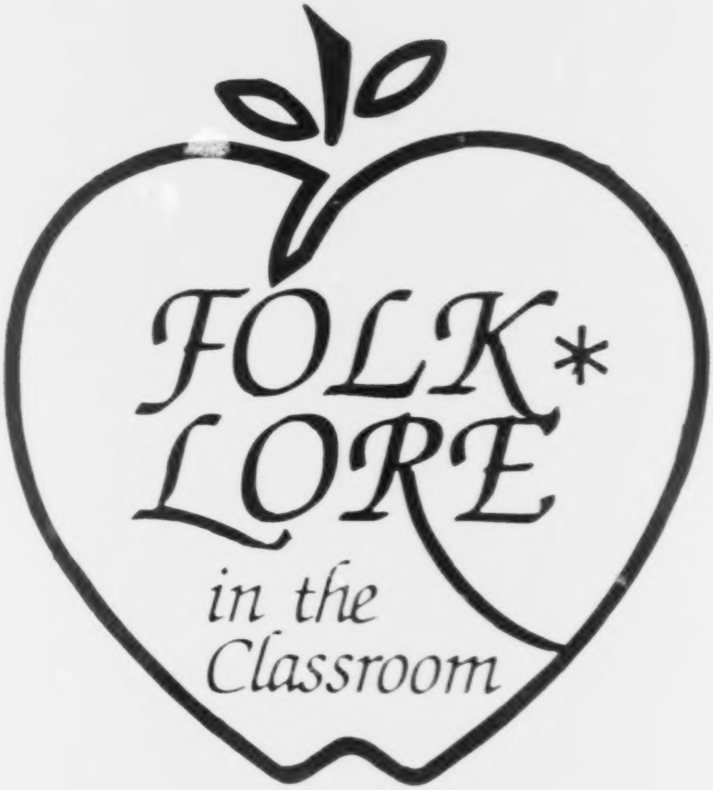

FOLK* LORE in the Classroom

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Preface

A growing interest in our traditions has brought about a need for teaching folklore in a more organized way. Unfortunately, the school day is already crowded with a plethora of subjects, activities, and special needs areas. Adding anything to an already busy day could easily be "the straw that broke the camel's back." Instead, the approach of this project is to provide the materials to enrich already existing curricula. These materials are intended to help teachers of English, social studies, mathematics and science, home economics, the arts, and other subject areas to become more knowledgeable about folklore and to inject this knowledge into their curricula.

The material is written by experts in the field of folklore for laymen. The reader is carefully guided from a definition of folklore, through the legends of yesteryear to the folkloric expressions of today. Suggested classroom exercises are provided as a starting point for implementation; every teacher can devise other projects and/or tailor them to local needs and situations.

Folklore dovetails perfectly with the study of Indiana history. The legends, crafts, customs, rituals, beliefs, music, architecture, and other folklore genres are the spice that adds flavor and meaning to the study of Indiana's earliest people as well as of our modern agri-business, industrial society.

Folklore, literature, and language are compatible bedfellows. The traditional phrases — "once upon a time" and "they all lived happily ever after" — have been used in literature for centuries.

Man has always been curious about nature. Weather, geology, medicine, and other sciences contain much traditional knowledge. A science teacher can add a bit of realism to lessons by incorporating folklore into the curriculum.

Particularly valuable to the busy teacher is the section on Using Local Resources. Most communities have people who are excellent resources. You may have a folk artist, a folk musician, or someone who is an expert on quilts or log cabins in your area. All communities have people who can become knowledgeable about a folklore genre and serve as a resource person. A special appendix has been included on conservation so that we can avoid certain pitfalls and create lasting historical products when a product is the goal.

This material is a valuable resource. It should be a great help for teachers of many curriculum areas. "Hats off" to the authors.

Joe Mathias, Kokomo

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Folklore in the Classroom

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INTRODUCING FOLKLORE

1

Defining Folklore

Objectives

- Clearing your mind of any preconceived notion of what folklore is,
- Understanding that folklore is all around us, and that, to a large extent, we are "the folk,"
- Learning the nature of "lore" and the concept of "folk groups," and
- Distinguishing folk culture from elite and popular culture.

Introduction

The task of defining folklore for those new to the field is a difficult one. In this essay, Dr. Barbara Allen, Professor of American Studies at the University of Notre Dame, presents a clear and balanced definition of folklore very useful to the beginner. This essay paves the way for the following essays in this section, which explore the finer points of understanding folklore in its various forms, explain where to look for folklore, and place folklore in the larger context of folk culture.

This essay may be supplemented by readings in the publications listed at the end of the text. This essay has no accompanying exercises; however, exercises in the following essays will help reinforce the definition of folklore for you and your students.

Defining Folklore

Barbara Allen

Folklore — what exactly *is* it? The word itself has a multitude of connotations and calls up a number of images in our minds. We may think of home remedies or weather sayings, of ghost stories and campfire songs, of hand-made quilts and hand-woven baskets as folklore. But what about jokes and graffiti, party games and yard decorations? These too can be considered folklore. Part of the reason for our failure to recognize the folklore that literally surrounds us is that the images of folklore fostered by popular usage mislead us into thinking we know what folklore is when we actually have only a hazy notion of its true nature. Perhaps we should begin by eliminating some misconceptions about it by stating what folklore is *not*.

- First, folklore is neither true nor false by nature. Whether it is in harmony or incongruent with science or history is irrelevant; the significance of a folk cure for warts or a local legend about John Dillinger, to take but two examples, is its presence and influence in people's lives.
- Second, the printed text of a song or a story alone is not folklore; it is only the record left behind of someone singing or telling a story. In other words, folklore is both a kind of behavior (singing, playing, joking, quilting, cooking) and the outcome of that behavior (a song, a game, a joke, a quilt, a pie). Thus, the texts of German fairy tales collected by the Grimm brothers nearly two centuries ago and the stories told around the table after Sunday dinner at home may differ markedly in content, but they are both the products of the same process of storytelling.
- Third, folklore does not include only "old-timey" or bygone traditions, such as soap-making, play parties, or fairy tales. It also includes contemporary practices and expressions, such as hanging plastic Easter eggs on dogwood trees in the spring, telling election year jokes, or responding to chain letters. While tradition is a term often used in conjunction with folklore, it refers less to the age of a particular element of folklore ("passed down through many generations") than to the means by which folklore is communicated — by word of mouth or by example.
- Finally, just as it is not time-bound, folklore is neither confined to a particular geographic setting (e.g., the southern mountains) nor restricted to a certain segment of the population (e.g., ethnic groups). All of us participate in folkloric activity, whether we live in the city or the country, whether we are in the minority or the mainstream of American society. Thus, folklore is not something "there" and "then" — far away in time and space — but very much "here" and "now," something that all of us are familiar with on an intimate, everyday basis.

Perhaps that very quality explains why folklore eludes simple definition. It's like asking a fish to define water. What envelopes us becomes so familiar that we are unaware of its presence and influence in our lives. But something as pervasive as folklore certainly deserves and needs to be brought more fully into consciousness, to be analyzed objectively so that we may better understand ourselves and the people around us.

But what aspect of ourselves and our behavior are we studying when we examine folklore? What is folklore, after all? To begin to answer this question, it may help to break the word down into its component parts.

Folk

As we've already seen, the folk are not a special group of people who live at a certain place or existed only in the past. Nor are they a certain class of people within a larger social structure. Instead, "folk" simply designates any group of people who share certain experiences, values, goals, or interests. Out of that sharing, members of the group generate and perpetuate forms of expression and behavior — i.e., folklore — that give voice and form to their responses to their experiences as a group.

For instance, workers on the job may play initiation pranks on newcomers; an immigrant community may institute an annual festival to celebrate the fusion of their Old World heritage with their new identity as Americans; a family recipe, jealously guarded from outsiders, may be shared with a new in-law as a statement of acceptance into the family; or children in a neighborhood may develop a "secret" language that they use among themselves to keep outsiders, especially adults, from understanding them. In each of these cases, we see a folk group in action.

But all of us have multiple identities, based on religion, family membership, ethnicity, occupation, age, sex, residence in a region, or any of a number of other criteria. Whenever we associate and interact with other people with whom we share some aspect of identity, we are participating in a folk group. Thus the construction worker who sends a greenhorn to find a board stretcher may also be a Polish Catholic father living in the Calumet region of Indiana. As such he participates in ethnic, religious, family, and regional folk groups in settings outside the work place.

"Folk" then is a flexible and dynamic concept, gauged by the extent to which interaction among people with shared experiences and a common identity produces a body of "lore."

Lore

The forms of expression and behavior generated within a folk group possess a well-defined set of characteristics or traits. One key quality of folklore is that it is patterned or structured in form; that is, it has an aesthetic or artistic dimension that sets it apart from ordinary conversation or activity.

For instance, we all recognize when someone is telling a joke or playing a game because of the verbal and gestural signals or patterns that accompany joking and playing. The joketeller may ask, "Have you heard the one about . . .?" or the player may make an exaggerated motion of tagging another player. Likewise, a proverbial expression such as "It's hotter than blue blazes" stands out more distinctly in the flow of talk than the simple remark "It sure is hot," just as the euphemism "It's snowing down south" is more artful than "Your slip is showing." Folklore affords a means of expressing or responding to experience in an aesthetically pleasing and artistically satisfying way.

A second characteristic of folklore is that it is generated and perpetuated in informal settings involving direct, usually face-to-face interaction among members of a folk group. Both informality and immediacy are critical elements in folklore.

For example, the contact between teacher and students in the classroom or between supervisor and workers in the workplace may be immediate but it is usually highly formalized or institutionalized, whereas the interaction among students exchanging taunts on the playground or workmates swapping boasts in the lunchroom is both informal and immediate and therefore folkloric in nature.

Direct interaction with other members of a folk group is a key characteristic of folklore. Take the case of someone who learns to quilt from a book rather than from another person in the family or community. From the folklorist's point of view, that person learning from a book is not engaged in a folkloric process, although the end product may look like a traditional quilt. To use another example, someone who learns traditional fiddle tunes from a recording may sound as authentic as someone who had learned the tunes from within his community. What is lacking in both instances, however, is the interaction with the folk group whose aesthetic standards for fiddling and quilting control individual performances and for whom both activities have a particular cultural meaning.

Finally, folklore exhibits variation, for, in the process of being performed (e.g., through storytelling) or enacted (e.g., through basketmaking), folklore is shaped to meet the needs of the performer, the audience, and the situation.

The language in an off-color joke, for instance, may be modified in the presence of members of the opposite sex, or the size of a traditional basket may be altered in response to community demand. Parodies are especially obvious examples of variation, in which form and content are deliberately manipulated for satiric or humorous effect.

Folklore, Popular Culture, and Elite Culture

Another way of looking at folklore is to place it in the context of culture as a whole. Folklorists often compare and contrast their field of study to popular and elite culture. Just as all of us participate in various folk groups, we also share in broader cultural influences that emanate from both popular and elite culture. Although the boundaries between the three modes of cultural expression are often blurry, keeping the characteristics of folklore clearly in mind helps us distinguish between the folk, the popular, and the elite.

Popular culture is defined as the expressions aimed at a broad, general audience, which are promulgated through media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and film. Whereas folklore is the result of interaction within a well-defined group, popular culture is nationwide in scope. Popular culture is often expressed in "fads" such as Michael Jackson T-shirts and Star Wars paraphernalia. Whereas folklore varies within the limits of group standards, popular culture is highly formalized: the exact same T-shirts are sold all over the country and even the world; the same movies and television commercials are shown in every community.

Elite culture is the original product of an individual artist or artistic group working outside the context of a folk community. Elite culture is often affected by folk culture: a choreographer may be influenced by a folk dance, or Mozart may have used a traditional melody as a basis for a symphonic movement. However, elite culture is created without direct interaction between creator/performer and audience, and it pushes beyond traditional aesthetics to create new and innovative forms.

There are, of course, cases in which the three varieties of cultural expression come into contact with each other. For instance, the products of folk crafts may be exhibited as art objects in a museum, or a slogan or catchword from a popular movie may achieve currency in oral tradition. But if we keep in mind that folklore is a process as well as a product and that it is inseparable from its folk group context, then we should have little difficulty in focusing our attention on the folk cultural elements in our lives and those of our students.

Key Works

Textbooks

Brunvand, Jan. *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction*, second edition. New York: W. W. Norton, 1978.
The most widely-used college folklore textbook; organized by genre, or kind of folklore, under the basic categories of verbal folklore (narratives, proverbs and riddles, songs, etc.), customary folklore (games and pastimes, etc.), and material folk traditions (architecture, food, costume, etc.). Useful bibliography at the end of each chapter, as well as a good introduction to folklore in chapter 1.

Toelken, J. Barre. *The Dynamics of Folklore*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1979.
Also a college-level text that focuses less on what folklore is than on how it is created and used in various situations and within various groups.

Fieldwork Guides

Lindahl, Carl, et al. *A Basic Guide to Fieldwork for Beginning Folklore Students*. Bloomington: Indiana University Folklore Publications Group, Vol. 7, 1979.
A fieldwork manual designed for college students; like Brunvand's text, it is organized largely by kinds of folklore; it also contains specific instructions on carrying out a field project.

Tallman, Richard S. and Laurna. *Country Folks: A Handbook for Student Folklore Collectors*. Batesville: Arkansas College Folklore Archive Publications, 1978.
A field manual aimed at high school students, organized around topics (e.g., family and local history) rather than genres; its chief limitation is its emphasis on rural folklife. There is a section for the teacher suggesting projects and guidelines for evaluating students' work.

Anthologies

Dégh, Linda, ed. *Indiana Folklore: A Reader*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980.
A collection of articles that have appeared in the journal *Indiana Folklore*, on various topics ranging from material culture to storytelling. Most of the articles are both descriptive and analytical in nature and would serve best as background reading for the teacher, rather than for students.

Dorson, Richard, ed. *Handbook of American Folklore*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983.
A collection of introductory essays by various authors on virtually every aspect of folklore. Good background reading for the teacher.

All of these books can be ordered from any college bookstore. The fieldwork guides and the Dégh collection are in paperback.

2

Folklore Genres

Objectives

- Understanding the definition and concept of genre;
- Identifying the six categories of folklore genres and understanding their use in studying folklore;
- Supplementing the definition of folklore by presenting examples of various genres;
- Reinforcing the fact that folklore is a dynamic process in all of its genres; and
- Introducing the limitations as well as the useful qualities of using genre classifications in folklore study.

Introduction

In this essay, folklorist and poet, Catherine Swanson describes the categories that folklorists use to classify their materials. The essay serves as a further definition of the materials of folklore and their characteristics.

Swanson has divided folklore materials into six categories instead of the usual three that folklorists have used in the past (oral, material, and customary). This expanded list reflects, to some extent, a more recent attitude toward folklore genres often overlooked by earlier folklorists, such as body movements and gestures.

Swanson's Key Works lists basic reference materials very helpful in genre study; her classroom exercises suggest projects that even younger students may use to learn folklore classifications, utilizing materials that are easily accessible.

Folklore Genres

Catherine Swanson

Although many folklorists prefer to study folklore as a process — a traditional way of doing something — they often find it difficult to understand the process without some sort of initial classification of what is being done. And so, typically, folklorists arrange what they encounter into groups based on shared characteristics. These divisions based on shared characteristics are called genres, and they benefit the student and first-time collector as well as the professional folklorist. They make folklore easy to spot and also allow the collector to make historical (time) and regional (space) comparisons. Furthermore, generic classifications of folklore help teachers who want to add folkloristic content to the subjects they teach.

Let's use an example, a legend. By knowing something about the formal characteristics of legends in general, we are able to pick a legend out of ordinary conversation, we can gain a clearer understanding of what a particular legend means for the person or people who tell it, and we can notice whether or not similar legends are told by other groups of people. Finally, we can make a decision about how the study of a certain legend, or legends in general, will enhance the study of a subject like state and local history.

Stories about a legendary historical figure may be hard to prove. However, whether or not the stories conform to historical "truth" as we know it, they can still provide insight into the history and world view of the people who tell them.

The legend is one genre of folklore. What are the shared characteristics of legends? A legend is often, although not always, told in the form of a narrative, a story. However, legends may also be fragmentary and occur sporadically and spontaneously in conversation. The basis of a legend is a belief or set of beliefs giving credibility to the events recounted in the legend. Some of the most popular legends in the United States concern unexplainable events, scary or horrible catastrophes, or the lives of historical figures.

Once we have identified a genre, we can look at various things, such as when a legend was started, by whom, and for what reason, and finally, how it is similar to or different from a legend in another time or another place. Do people tell the same legends in the Midwest and the South? What is different (or the same) about legends told now and legends told at the turn of the century? Has a legend changed significantly through repeated tellings?

Listing and defining a significant number of folklore genres would make a book in itself, and detailed information about various genres can be found in the reference materials located at the end of this chapter. And so, let's turn our attention to a small list of broad categories under which many similar genres may be grouped.

The simplest arrangement, and the most common, is the division of genres into three categories: verbal, material, and customary. These three categories are a little too broad, however, and the list can be expanded to six: **verbal, material, customary, belief, body communication,** and **music and song.**

As we discuss the kinds of folklore included in each of these categories, it will become obvious that some genres can be placed in more than one category. A legend, for example, is verbal when it is told, customary when it is part of a ritual (such as the initiation of new campers each summer), and also an example of belief (say, in ghosts). In spite of some overlap, however, understanding the broad categories makes collecting and interpretation easier by pointing out fundamental similarities.

Verbal Genres

Passing on information by word of mouth has been an important (but not the only) feature of the folklore process. Consequently, we would expect to find many genres of folklore classified as **verbal art.** This category includes those traditional expressions that rely on words: fairy tales, tall tales, personal experience stories, historical legends, place names, oral history, jokes, proverbs, riddles, games, rhymes, regional speech, horror stories and ghost stories, myths, and the words to ballads and songs.

Most of the genres in this category involve what we say; they are a part of our **oral tradition**; that is, we pass them on by "word of mouth." Some of them, however, have also been written down or incorporated into another medium. Because almost everyone in the United States has access to many ways of giving and receiving information, a definition of verbal art based solely on oral tradition becomes difficult. Modern life is complex, and contrary to what we might imagine, we can expect our folklore to reflect some of this complexity. We need to keep in mind, however, that there is a difference between verbal art expressed in media and narratives that began in a contrived way and have never had a demonstrated oral tradition (such as the stories of Paul Bunyan created for an advertising campaign).

We are all familiar with some verbal genres: tall tales, fairy tales, jokes, proverbs, rhymes. These genres are obvious because they have the most concrete form and are often part of growing up. Fairy tales tell a story, jokes have punch lines, proverbs pass on wisdom, and rhymes rhyme. Other obvious verbal genres are regional speech patterns and place names. The way people talk and the names they give their communities reflect the heritage of that locality's inhabitants and the settlement patterns of the region. These traditional verbal expressions are examples of regional unity and uniqueness. For example, most states have nicknames, and speculation about the origin of these names enjoys quite a healthy oral tradition. The name "Hoosier" is a good case in point.

There are other verbal genres that occur as frequently as the ones already mentioned, but they are sometimes not as obvious because they occur in conversation. One example is the personal experience story. A good storyteller can repeat the same personal experience story many times, making the same or a new point every time, without diminishing the impact of the story.

Many personal experience stories focus on the theme, "when I was young . . . ." (or "the good old days"), and in this respect, have something in common with oral history. Oral history is the recounting of historical events from the perspective and in the words of a single narrator. Stories set in the historical past and having to do with the exploits of colorful characters or heroes are often legends. These stories are sometimes hard to prove but told as true. Students are no doubt familiar with the stories about "Johnny Appleseed," who is said to have been responsible for planting thousands of apple trees throughout the Midwest.

One of the most popular traditional verbal expressions among children and adolescents is the horror story. Horror stories, which sometimes involve ghosts or macabre incidents, have been called "urban legends" by one folklorist (see the Key Works at the end of this chapter). This term is somewhat misleading because it implies that these stories circulate only in cities when, in fact, they are widespread in the United States.

Unlike historical legends, modern horror stories are set in the very recent past — sometimes as recent as yesterday — and often relate incidents that are reported to have happened in the immediate vicinity or to people of the local community. One of the best known of these stories is "The Hatchet Man" or "Roommate's Death." The story tells of the untimely hatchet death of a college coed who stays in an empty dorm during a school holiday.

Myths are not as widespread as legends in the modern world. That is not to say that we do not have mythological elements in our belief systems, but rather, that we do not tend to pass on our myths as traditional narratives. A myth is a story about the nature of the universe, the beginning of the world, and humankind's place in that world. We often rely on institutionalized religious teachings to provide us with our conception of the world and universe, or we rely on institutionalized scientific teachings. In popular use, the word myth has come to mean "untrue." Folklorists do not use the word in this way; they prefer the original, fundamental meaning.

Material Genres

We have discussed folklore genres that have words as their final products. Some genres, however, have artifacts rather than words as their final products. An artifact is a man-made, generally handmade, object. Folklorists refer to these artifacts, and to their production, their use, and their meaning in society as material culture. Material culture may represent domestic life, farm life, industry and trade, or the general cultural landscape (for instance, the layout of farm buildings or traditional interior design).

Artifacts in this category include, among others, textiles (e.g., rag rugs, embroidery, quilts), food (e.g., preservation techniques, threshing dinners, old family recipes), crafts (e.g., basketmaking, furniture making, chair caning), architecture (e.g., old houses and buildings, farm layouts), and folk art (e.g., easter egg decoration, stenciling, hand-carved gravestones).

What sets folk artifacts apart from other artifacts, such as a well-crafted work of fine art, is that the techniques for the construction of folk artifacts are learned informally by imitation and in apprenticeship, and are handed down over generations by word of mouth. They are the product of creative imagination coupled with traditional patterns and often serve a utilitarian purpose as well as an artistic one. For example, a basketmaker who has grown up in a basketmaking family and has learned to make baskets "just like her mother made" is participating in the folklore process, whereas a person who reads a book about basketmaking and then attempts to make the basket from this instruction is not necessarily participating in the folklore process.

Because folk art and craft are so popular in our decorative taste these days, it is often difficult to judge how authentic a particular artifact is. If we keep in mind, however, that every artifact has three major components — form, process, and use — and that any or all of these can be traditional, we can look at folk artifacts with a more educated eye.

For example, using basketmaking as an illustration, we can demonstrate the relationship of the three major components. When we think of what a basket is, we think of a **container** (its form) made of some sort of natural material like wood, grass, or vines. It is **woven** (the process) and typically serves as a method of **storage or transport** (its use). Now, if a traditional craftsman should decide to use pre-woven plastic filament to create a basket, the form and use would still be traditional. By the same token, if a person should decide to use a hand-made basket as part of a sculpture or as a piece of decor, the form and process of making it would still be traditional. Another example of the three-component folk artifact that may not be traditional in all three components is the woven rug made from plastic bread wrappers instead of rags. (Actually, this use of plastic bread wrappers is becoming traditional itself!)

There are some operating principles that seem to govern the production of folk artifacts. In the first place, every society (or region, or community) has a basic idea of what things are supposed to look like. This idea is second nature to the members of that society; anything different looks unusual to their eyes. That is why a South Carolina sweetgrass basket will "make sense" as a basket to a South Carolinian and an Indiana split oak basket will "make sense" as a basket to a Hoosier. Consequently, a folk craftsman will not necessarily need elaborate plans because everyone in his community knows how things are made. Therefore, instruction can be easily obtained through apprenticeship or observation.

The role of traditional craftsmen has changed over the years as largescale manufacturing has replaced individual and home industry. Folk crafts are not "dying out," however; simply, the craftsman now spends time creating for a specialized market rather than for a mass market, and he often is called upon to repair older items. As with the other genres of folklore, the material genres are constantly adapting themselves to modern life while at the same time retaining many of the qualities that have made them traditional.

Customary Genres

When the most important feature of a folklore genre is neither words nor artifacts, but action — what we do and how we do it — we classify the genre under the heading **folk custom**. This action is not to be confused with the folklore process, the means by which any kind of folklore is created. Rather, folk custom refers to folklore in which action itself is the product. Special events are the basis for much folk custom. Some examples are calendar customs and seasonal events, religious celebrations and rituals, community festivals, music and craft fairs, folk medicine, magic and witchcraft, family traditions, school and sporting events.

As we can see, this category encompasses a variety of genres and includes some genres that also fit into other categories. For example, if decorating Easter eggs is a prominent act in celebrating Easter, the decorated eggs (artifacts) and perhaps a story about an unusually talented decorator in the family (personal experience story) will also be important parts of the Easter celebration.

As if this were not confusing enough, there is sometimes also a problem in trying to determine how the traditionality of the custom has been influenced or inflated by boosterism. Several years ago, a sign was hung in a store window in southern Indiana saying, "Our famous annual sale now in progress." The store had been in business for less than a year! Not only had the sign misrepresented the history of the sale, but it had done something else. It indicated a desire to see this sale become a famous, annual event. Such a desire is legitimate and certainly good for business, but it hardly makes the sale a tradition. Not every case of seeming traditionality is a case of "hype," but we should realize at the same time that not every festival, seasonal event, or folksy occasion is authentically traditional.

Rituals are examples of folk custom in which the action is traditionally prescribed and forms a set procedure or a ceremony. Many rituals are connected to the major events of the human cultural life-style. We call these rituals **rites of passage** because they signify the passage from one stage of life to another. Major life stage transitions are birth, puberty or becoming an adult, marriage, old age, and death. Different societies have different ways of marking and celebrating life changes. In our society birth, marriage, and death are most clearly marked by ritual.

One colorful ritual in America is the teasing of the married couple after the wedding ceremony has been performed. In years gone by, this practice occurred after the couple had retired for the night. It was call a shivaree. Neighbors and friends gathered under the window to bang pans, blow horns, and pelt the window with corn until the hapless couple emerged and gave treats to the group. Shivarees are rare now, but the practice still exists in the form of decorating the wedding couple's car before they leave for their honeymoon.

Belief Genres

The category of folk belief also contains some overlap from other categories. Earlier in this chapter, we looked at legends, a genre that uses words, but also one that has a very strong element of belief. Whether or not a legend, or any other folk belief, is actually true is of less folkloristic importance than the fact that it is told as if it were true and is based on shared assumptions (e.g., the existence of ghosts). Shared assumptions are the core of all the genres classified as folk belief, as indeed they form the foundation for culture in general. In addition, folk belief includes behavior, personal experience, and sometimes artifacts. Among the genres classified under the heading folk belief are legends, myths, folk medicine, weather lore (e.g., "red sky at morning . . . ."), agricultural lore (e.g., planting by the signs), and magic (e.g., the evil eye).

A person may feel a certain amount of ambivalence about his own folk belief. One can simultaneously claim not to believe something (say, the existence of ghosts or good luck charms) and still spontaneously react as if he did believe. How many times, for example, have we all found ourselves walking more quickly in the dark past a graveyard or crossing our fingers for good luck?

This ambivalence may have something to do with the fact that folk beliefs are hard to prove, if they can be proven at all. It may also have something to do with the fact that the word "superstition" — often used synonymously with "folk belief" — has come to mean something based on ignorance. Few people wish to be considered ignorant; yet, there is a powerful curiosity in humankind about knowledge of the unknown. Both religion and science attempt to answer this urge to go deeper into human experience, and both religion and science require that some things be taken — at least for the time being — on faith alone. Keeping in mind that some of the things that western civilization has "proven" were already known in folk wisdom (the effect of the moon on tides, for instance), we need to treat the study of folk belief as the study of "other ways of seeing."

Body Communication Genres

Some genres of folklore emphasize the use of the body as the medium of expression. These genres include ritual behavior (e.g., processions, kneeling or standing to pray, ceremonies), gestures, informal social interactions (e.g., a curtsy or a bow), art forms (e.g., dances), and games.

Whenever we engage in body communication, we are expressing a thought or feeling without the aid of words. We are letting our "actions speak louder than words." And, of course, just as other forms of expression have their traditions, so does body communication. Just as there are traditional stories, customs, and crafts, there are also traditional dances, greetings, and hand signals.

The product of these genres is ephemeral; it cannot be recorded adequately in words nor can it be kept in museums like some artifacts. It was not until videotapes became easily available to folklorists that fieldworkers were able to capture traditional body movements in a reliable, inexpensive way. The product — the dance or the gesture — exists primarily in the midst of the participants and the observers and in the on-going action. A dance or set of traditional gestures is an example of the shared aesthetic and shared identity of the group. It is one of the traditional ways in which people let others know that they belong to the group.

One kind of traditional body communication is folk dance. In some cultures (e.g., many African societies), the ability to move several parts of the body to independent rhythms at the same time is considered an important and beautiful element of dance. This also characterizes a modern tradition in American popular dance (as in the break dances of urban America). In other cultural heritages, however, too much suppleness of the body is considered to be a little bit unseemly, and perfect execution of the choreography ("the steps") is considered important. Clogging and square dancing are modern adaptations of traditional dances. It is important to keep in mind that many clogging and square dancing groups are trained performers, not necessarily trained through the folklore process, even though their dancing style may be in keeping with the traditions from which it is derived.

Among some groups of people in the United States dancing was (and is) considered sinful. In place of dances, young people used to engage in play parties. Play parties are neither game nor dance, but they are derived from both and allowed people to have fun without dancing by moving in a set pattern to instructions given in song. Many of us are familiar with the children's game, "The Hokey Pokey" ("Put your left foot . . . .") which is similar to a play party. Few people engage in play parties now, but there are many people who remember them from childhood and can describe them well.

It is not always possible for students to observe authentic folk dances; however, there are other good examples of traditional body communication they might study. In our daily lives, we rely quite often on the use of gestures. We wink, shake hands, and wave hello and good-bye. Very often, certain groups will have specialized gestures to act as short cuts for lengthy communication or to serve as a secret sort of jargon (for example, the signs used by pitcher and catcher in baseball, or secret handshakes among the members of a fraternal organization).

Music Genres

Although folksong lyrics are words, folksongs are included here because the lyrics are only half of the folksong; the music is the other half. Because folk music has enjoyed popularity for several decades, it is often hard to distinguish between a true folk singer/musician, a popular entertainer who performs folk songs or folk music, and an entertainer whose style is "folksy." As with other genres where the folk style has been incorporated into popular entertainment (folk dance, especially), we should not let this blending of folk and popular become discouraging. In the first place, there are still authentic folk musicians to be found. In the second place, we can learn something about folklore in general from in-depth research regarding the kinds of songs and music played by good popular musicians, especially if they make the effort to present music of their own heritage as accurately as possible.

Some of the songs that fall into this category of folklore genres are ballads (stories told in song), lullabies, play songs (e.g., "London Bridge"), work songs, fraternity or club songs, the blues, traditional hymn singing (e.g., shape-note or lining out), and parody songs. Some of the instruments used in folk music are the fiddle, dulcimer, banjo, harmonica, and jews-harp. Besides musicians who play for dances or song accompaniment, or who perform professionally, we also occasionally find an informal gathering place where local musicians gather just to "pick" with each other, or we come across "kitchen bands," where the members use kitchen utensils as instruments.

Bill Merritt, banjo player from Rensselaer, Jasper County. Courtesy, Indiana Arts Commission.

Music is often one of the ways in which an ethnic community in the United States will highlight its old world heritage. We should not confine our search for folk music and folk songs to county fairs and square dances, but should also look at weddings, social gatherings in ethnic neighborhoods, and large-scale ethnic holiday celebrations, such as St. Patrick's Day, which is a holiday of great significance to Irish-Americans, but a less important celebration in Ireland.

Key Works

Baker, Ronald L. *Hoosier Folk Legends.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.
This book has a good, lengthy introduction which discusses legends in general. The legends presented in the book are divided by topic and are specific to Indiana in that they have been collected in the state. Annotation for each legend is provided at the back of the book.

Brunvand, Jan Harold. *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction.* 2nd edition. N. Y.: W. W. Norton, 1978.
Brunvand has chosen to organize the folklore genres he discusses into three groupings: oral, customary, and material. He provides an introduction to the field of folklore and also the study of folklore. In addition, he discusses the nature of folk groups in various segments of American society.

Dégh, Linda, ed. *Indiana Folklore: A Reader.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980.
The introduction of the book deals with folklore in general with some reference to Indiana. The chapters, covering a range of folklore genres, are reprints of articles from the journal, *Indiana Folklore.*

Dorson, Richard M. *Folklore and Folklife.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.
Many of the articles in this book are directed toward folklore graduate students. However, three are helpful to the general reader: Henry Glassie, "Folk Art," 253-80; Warren Roberts, "Folk Architecture," 281-93; and "Folk Crafts," 233-52.

Folktales of the World Series. Richard M. Dorson, General Editor. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
This is a series of books. Each book has an introduction concerning the study of folktales in that country. Individual volumes for Chile, China, England, France, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Mexico, and Norway.

Brunvand, Jan Harold. *The Vanishing Hitchhiker: American Urban Legends and Their Meanings.* New York: W. W. Norton, 1981.
The good introduction and discussions in the book, along with the legend texts, set a traditional genre in its modern setting. The title is misleading, but the overall treatment of the genre is good.

Genre Bulletin Board

Age: elementary or middle school

Objectives:

- to provide the student with visual representations of various genres
- to augment class disscussion of folklore
- to stimulate interest in folklore

Instructions:

As a way to augment class discussion of folklore and stimulate further interest in the subject, the teacher may select one of the options below:

- one bulletin board to be set up for a specific length of time with all items belonging to the same category grouped together under a label stating what category the group belongs to. Each item should have a caption or label indicating its genre.
- a rotating series of bulletin board displays devoted to one category of genres at a time.

Items that may be used:

old photographs or newspaper clippings
current photographs or newspaper clippings
pictures cut out of magazines
dust jackets from books
student poems or essays
the texts to folksongs and ballads
programs from festivals or performances
examples of folk craft (a woven rug, for example)

Genre List

Age: middle school

Objectives:

- **introduction to the various genres of folklore**
- **providing students with a cooperative project**
- **introducing students to collecting folklore through fieldwork**

Instructions:

Together with the students, make a list of folklore genres using the six categories mentioned in this chapter. Have each student choose (or assign each student to) one genre that he or she will be responsible for.

The student should:

1) provide an example of that genre, collected either from
   a) himself
   b) his family or neighbors, or from another student
   c) from a written source
   d) elsewhere

2) write a brief essay (1-2 pages) or give a brief oral report on his example, including the following:
   a) description of his example — why does it fit this genre and this category?
   b) when and where was it collected?
   c) from whom was it collected?
   d) how is it used? (entertainment? conversation? ritual? etc.)

Guidelines for beginning fieldwork will be found in the essay, "Finding Folklore."

Thematic Genre Collection

Age: high school

Objectives:

- **to introduce students to various genres**
- **to introduce students to basic fieldwork and archiving practices**
- **to provide students with a cooperative experience**
- **to encourage students to organize what they discover in a way that can be useful to other students in the future**

Instructions:

Have the class choose a theme to govern this collection project. This theme may deal with something that is pertinent to the immediate locale of the school. Future collections may involve new themes.

Some ideas for themes are:

traditions of our town (county, state, region)
farming
the domestic world
ethnic groups
legendary characters
good luck/bad luck

- Each student is responsible for making at least one contribution to the collected effort from his or her own fieldwork. Students may also want to find examples from written works and the mass media.
- A secretary/archivist should be elected or appointed to keep track of all contributions and with his/her assistants to arrange, organize, and index all contributions according to genre and category.
- Once the material has been arranged and organized, it can be donated to the school library.

- Student collectors will need:
  - notebooks and pencils
  - cassette tape recorder (if needed)
  - camera (if needed)
- With each contribution, the following information should be included:
  - genre, category
  - name of informant
  - address of informant
  - date collected
  - place collected
  - name of collector
- Archivist will need:
  - file cards, file box
  - scrapbook for photographs and/or slides
  - scrapbook for printed material
  - file folders and file box (letter size or larger)

Guidelines for doing fieldwork can be found in the essay, "Finding Folklore."

3

Finding Folklore

Objectives

- Investigating your own life for folkloric elements;
- Translating your new-found knowledge to the lives of your students;
- Probing beyond the school setting and into the community for folklore; and
- Recognizing the folklore abundant in written and media sources.

Introduction

In this essay, professional folklorist Betty Belanus explains how to proceed with "folklore detective work," i.e., discovering where folklore is hidden and who has possession of it. From the very basic investigation of yourself and your students, Belanus suggests ways of branching out to find folklore in the school setting, in the community and in published and media sources.

While sometimes lighthearted, this essay points out the basic fact that, before we can successfully begin using the materials of folklore, we must make it a daily habit to recognize folklore all around us. A special section gives practical suggestions for the collection of folklore.

Finding Folklore

Betty Belanus

Now that you have a basic understanding of what folklore is, and the various genres it comes in, the question may still remain in your mind, "How do I find folklore?" The basic introduction to the definition and genres of folklore may have given you a clue: folklore is virtually everywhere around us. Before being alerted to the definition of folklore, you may have considered it something that could only be found among the remotest peoples in the mountains and on Indian reservations. The truth is, that Indiana abounds with folklore. The easiest place to find folklore at first is to search your own background. Where are you from? How were you raised? What sorts of things have you done in your life that have generated folklore? Once you have searched your own life for folklore, you will be ready to help your students search their lives. Then, both you and the students will be prepared to go forth into the community in which you live and explore the folklore of that community and beyond.

Finding Your Own Folklore

Finding your own folklore is an exercise in self-discovery. The best way to begin is by thinking about the folklore of the group you are probably most intimate with — your family, both the family you were born into as well as the family you have created. Family folklore may be described as the stories and traditions we share with our immediate or extended families, which revolve around everyday experiences and special occasions. More detailed information about family folklore is located in the second section of the workbook in the articles "Folklore, History, and Social Studies" and "Domestic Folklore."

Think back to your childhood and adolescent years at home: the stories you were told, the skills you learned, and the customs you observed. Folklorists often hear the frustrated cry, "But, my family is so ordinary — they don't have any interesting folklore." Perhaps compared with some other families yours may seem to have less folklore, but there is still a great deal there to discover.

The perpetuation of oral lore probably began with lullabies, patty-cake rhymes, and other traditional lore that your parents and other adults used. Chances are you are using some of the same kinds of folklore today to help your own children, nieces or nephews, or grandchildren get to sleep or learn basic coordination.

Songs, such as favorite holiday songs or even "Happy Birthday to You," are one form of musical folklore passed down through the family, as are proverbs, proverbial phrases, and other short sayings. Who among us has not come out with some phrase that their mother, father, or other family member "always said"? These forms of folklore are often tied in with folk belief. For instance, it was probably one of your parents or grandparents from whom you first heard the saying "Red sky at night, sailor's delight. Red sky at morning, sailor take warning."

Customary and material lore can also be discovered through family channels. Holiday and birthday customs are a good example of customary lore. A dramatic way to realize how deep-seated family customs are is to remember the first time you spent Christmas, Thanksgiving, or another important holiday away from your usual family setting. Remember the out-of-place feeling you had? If you have a family of your own now, you may think about what traditions you have carried on, and what new traditions you have instituted.

Even if you did not learn a traditional craft, such as quilting or woodcarving, or a traditional skill such as fly fishing or gardening from your family, there are probably some material forms of folklore that you can find in your repertory of family folklore. An obvious one is food. Even if you do not have a single family recipe in your files, chances are the attitudes toward the foods you eat and the way you prepare and serve them have been affected by your family life. Think about it — do you always cook beans a certain way because that's the way it was done in your family? Do you use the same brand of mayonnaise that your mother always used? There are many other forms of family folklore that you can search your background for.

Consider, now, the folklore you have learned as a member of peer groups, organizations, and during your professional life. We are, after all, members of several interlocking groups of "folk," each with its own lore. Now that you are alerted to the definition and kinds of folklore, you will begin to discover folklore in all facets of your daily life.

Helping Students Find Their Folklore

The best way to help students discover their own folklore is by familiarizing yourself with their worlds. You probably know your students pretty well already and have observed the kinds of interests they have. Folklore can help you know your students even better in the process of helping them become aware of their own traditions.

Again, the best place for students to begin is at the family level. But the school setting is also an excellent source for finding folklore. Younger children learn playground games, jumprope rhymes, and riddles from one another. Older students may be branching out into dirty jokes, the latest "hip" phrases, and stories about favorite celebrities. School-age folklore, like all folklore, is ever-present. It can include complaints about cafeteria food, traditional cheers at basketball games, rumors and legends about school chums and teachers. All of these are passed on from student to student, and often from one generation of students to the next. Further clues to identifying student-age folklore are found in the essays "Folk Culture: Putting Folklore in Context" and "Making Sense Out of Contemporary Phenomena."

As you observe your students using folklore in their daily lives, alert them to their usage. The best way to understand folklore, after all, is to keep observing it in our everyday lives. If you follow this exercise constantly, and help your students follow it, finding folklore will become second nature to you.

Finding Folklore Beyond Your Own Experience

If identifying the folklore in your own life and that of your students is the first step in truly understanding the nature of folklore, the second step is branching out to discover the folklore of other people and groups. You and your students may begin branching out by exploring the school environment.

How about the women that work in the school cafeteria? Often they are excellent traditional cooks. The school custodian may be a great woodcarver or may plant a garden "by the signs of the moon." The school nurse may be able to supply you with fascinating stories about folk medical practices she has encountered. The music teacher may be a collector of old-time songs or fiddle tunes. Without even leaving the school building, in other words, a wealth of folklore could be found, as well as leads into the community's other traditions and tradition bearers.

When we reach beyond ourselves to approach other tradition bearers, folklore collecting can get a bit frightenening. Even interviewing one's own family members can elicit nervousness and embarrassment, much less calling on mere acquaintances or perfect strangers.

If shyness and embarrassment can be overcome, however, students (as well as) teachers can become excellent "folklore detectives." As with any detective work, the key is to ask the right questions. Several fieldwork guides have been published that help supply beginners with model questions and strategies. A couple of the best guides are listed at the end of this essay, and, in the third section of the workbook, "Using Local Resources" will give you more clues to sources for folklore in your local community. Good collecting habits should be encouraged from the very beginning since, we hope, the information collected will be used not only by the students collecting it, but by many researchers and other interested persons in the future.

Good collecting techniques come with practice, and there may not be much time for practice in a short project or section using folklore in your classroom. But, if the suggestions here and others found in the Key Works listed at the end of the essay are generally followed to the best of a student's abilities, better information will be collected from the very beginning of a folklore-finding project.

Search ME!

Age: 4th grade and above

Objective:

- **to search one's own experience for folklore as a first step in truly understanding the nature of folklore materials**

Things needed: pencil and paper, attached form, or a form of the teacher's devising

Time: overnight assignment

Other information: The exercise form on the next page may be adapted by the teacher to suit the age group and/or unit being taught.

Instructions:

- After learning the definition of folklore, students may use this exercise to discover their personal folklore beliefs, habits, and customs.
- After completing their exercise forms, students should be encouraged to share the information they have "collected" from themselves with the whole class.

Search ME! Form

1. Name, address, age:

2. My nicknames:
    a. Now, among my friends:
    b. Now, among my family:
    c. When I was younger:
3. Things I do for good luck:

4. The last joke I heard and/or told someone was:

5. Games I play on the playground are:

6. What I eat for Thanksgiving (or Easter/Christmas/Passover) dinner:

7. Who taught me to cook, quilt, sew, fish, hunt, or carve wood, etc. and how long it took:

8. The first song that I remember my grandmother, mother, father, or other family member singing to me:

Folklore Scavenger Hunt

Age: Could be adapted to any age group, but best for 4th grade or above.

Objectives:

- **to reach beyond one's self and into the family and community for folklore materials**
- **to begin forming an awareness that folklore is all around us**
- **to foster good habits of collecting folklore materials**

Things needed: exercise form provided, or one of teacher's own devising; writing implements

Time: At least one overnight, perhaps more, to provide interaction with as many people as possible.

Instructions:

- This exercise would be used following units on Defining Folklore and Identifying Genres. Students should use a form provided, and find an example of each item listed.
- Children should be encouraged to involve schoolmates, siblings, and parents and other family members, as well as neighbors, club leaders, etc. Information may be gathered over the phone, although face-to-face communication should be encouraged.
- The teacher should go over each question with students beforehand to allow for questions and discussion of what is expected. The teacher may wish to add more items, or change any items to make them more relevant to the community, age group, or lesson plan.
- The teacher should consult one of the collection guides listed in the Key Works of this essay before the assignment is given.
- The teacher may wish to encourage students to use a cassette tape recorder to collect these items.

Folklore Scavenger Hunt Form

1. **Collect either a jump-rope rhyme or a "counting out" rhyme. Write down the words here, just as you heard them:**

Who did you collect this from?

Name

Address

Age

Where did you collect it?

2. **Collect a belief or saying about the weather:**

Who did you collect this from?

Name

Address

Age

Where did you collect it?

3. **Find a folk craft item or a homemade toy. Draw it here, and give the size of the real item:**

Where did you find the folk craft item or toy?

Who does it belong to and how was it made?

4. Collect a folk song, a lullaby, or a funny take-off on a serious song. Write one verse here:

Who did you collect this from?

Name

Address

Age

Where did they learn it?

5. Collect a joke or riddle. Write it here just as you heard it:

Who did you hear it from?

Name

Address

Age

Where did they learn it?

COLLECTION DATA

Collector (please print): ____________________

Course: __________ Instructor: __________ Semester: ______ Year: ______

Permanent address: ______________ Local address: ______________

______________ ______________

Phone: ( ) __________ Age: ___ Sex: ______ Ancestry: ____________

Performer/Informant (please print): ____________________

Permanent address: ______________ Local address: ______________

______________ ______________

Phone: ( ) __________ Age: ___ Sex: ______ Birthplace: ____________

Performer/Informant Information:

Marital status:

Family size:

Occupation:

Ethnic background:

Religion:

Mother's birthplace:

Father's birthplace:

Relationship of performer/informant to collector:

Genres collected from performer/informant:

Other pertinent information (educational level, hobbies, other places lived):

Context and Performance Information:

Setting (location, time of day):

Number of people present:

Relationship among participants (friends, relatives, strangers, etc.):

Duration of performance:

Sequence of events:

Other pertinent information:

Indiana University
Folklore Institute

E3.3

Collecting Folklore

- First, to collect folklore properly, the use of a cassette tape recorder is invaluable. Since folklorists value the way that people give their information — their speech patterns, the nuances of their phrases, and the exact wording of their stories — recordings are essential. For beginners, it is easier to record the speech of tradition bearers (referred to in the following discussion as well as other places in the workbook as "informants") than it is to try to write down every word, and sketchy notes make for inaccurate and incomplete information. Thus, access to and familiarity with the operation of a cassette recorder is of the utmost importance. Since most students feel uncomfortable at first with this equipment, practice runs are advocated.

- A camera may be used to make a visual record of informants, their physical environments, and their material folk culture. Although a 35 mm. camera is ideal, many budgets cannot provide such an expensive item. Students may also be more comfortable using the instamatic, disk, or even Polaroid camera that their families own. If you have any notion of publishing the results of the student findings, however, training sessions with a good 35 mm. camera should be considered. Many schools now offer photography courses that may benefit students in the long run.

- Aside from equipment, students should be encouraged to collect proper background information from anyone they collect folklore from. This includes such information as age, sex, ethnic origins, place of birth, religion, affiliations with service or other organizations, and relationship to the collector. A form from the Indiana University Folklore Archives is duplicated at the end of this chapter and may serve as a model for the collection of such information. This information is pertinent to the folklore collected since without it, the folklore items collected have very little value as research.

- The context of the collecting session should also be noted. Was the folklore collected at a joke-telling session among peers, or around the dinner table, or in the living room after school? Was there an audience and, if so, how did it respond to the folklore? Was the informant nervous, upset, or perfectly at ease when explaining the folklore item? Did he or she make any significant body movements, hand motions, or other non-verbal gestures that will not be recorded on the tape? These should all be noted carefully.

- One of the biggest problems of the beginning collector is the tendency to dominate the interview. That is, the collector may talk more than the informant, finish sentences, and jump in with a new question before the person is finished answering the first. In folklore collecting, patience is a great virtue. Ask one question at a time, and let the tradition bearer take time in answering.

- Although having a tentative list of questions on hand helps keep a collecting session on track, beginning collectors often let that list of questions rule the interview. Again, patience is advocated. If one question on the list leads to a question that is not on the list, but could yield valuable information you had not previously considered, by all means ask this question! Folklore collecting is, in many ways, a very serendipitous practice. Students may come away from a collecting session with completely different — but equally useful — information from that which they set out to gather.

- In contrast, another problem of the beginner is learning how to control the "runaway informant." This situation occurs when a tradition bearer begins talking about something that may be interesting, but has nothing to do with folklore of any kind. The tradition bearer may, for example, begin telling you all about his recent back surgery, his new grandchild, or the book that he has been reading. After recognizing that the informant is getting off the track, the collector needs to regain control gently with another relevant question. Since people are easily annoyed if they think your interest in them extends only as far as the pertinent information they are providing you, a certain amount of tolerance should be shown for this unrelated information out of politeness. It can always be edited out of the interview transcript later.

Finding Folklore to Use in the Classroom

In many cases, sending your students out to collect folklore is not your goal in using folklore materials. Perhaps you wish to find examples of folklore to use in a specific lesson or unit. In this case, published sources are the fastest and easiest sources. Several excellent bibliographies on folklore materials are available; two are listed at the end of this essay. In addition, the publications listed at the end of each chapter of the workbook are good references on specific topics.

Materials are also available upon inquiry from such archives as the Indiana University Folklore Archives and Archives of Traditional Music and the Library of Congress' Archive of Folk Culture. If these archives do not have the specific information you are seeking, they may be able to refer you to other sources as well. The librarian at the Indiana University Folklore Collection at the Main Library may also help suggest books on specific subjects and give information about their availability. Addresses for these resources are listed in this chapter. In addition, see the chapter on "Using Local Resources" in this workbook.

With your new sensitivity to folklore topics, however, written sources of all types should begin providing illustrations of folklore. Newspapers and magazines are excellent sources of information about local, regional, national, and international folklore. They often feature articles about craftspeople, weatherlore predictions, and other specific traditions and attitudes. The comics present humorous versions of folk attitudes and beliefs, or variations on jokes passed on orally. National leaders are quoted using traditional proverbs. And on and on.

Electronic media offer the same possibilities for finding folklore and passing it on to your students. The chapter in this workbook entitled "Making Sense Out of Contemporary Phenomena" gives more insight on using contemporary sources in folklore.

In conclusion, it should be clear by now that folklore is not difficult to find. However, before identifying folklore can become second nature to you and your students, daily practice in finding folklore may be necessary. Look around — there is probably some folklore lurking in your desk drawer, on your coffee table, or in the alley outside your window.

Resources for Published and Archival Materials

- Indiana University Folklore Archives
  510 North Fess
  Bloomington, IN 47405
- Archives of Traditional Music
  Maxwell Hall, Indiana University
  Bloomington, IN 47405
- Folklore Librarian, Polly Grimshaw
  7th Floor, Main Library
  Indiana University
  Bloomington, IN 47405
- Archive of Folk Culture
  Library of Congress
  Washington, D.C. 20540

Key Works

American Folklife Center. *Folklife and Fieldwork: A Layman's Introduction to Field Techniques.* Washington, D.C.: American Folklife Center, 1979. (Available at a nominal cost from the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540.)
This basic guide to fieldwork is a good introduction to the subject of collecting folklore. Brief and has good illustrations.

Belanus, Betty. "Identifying Folklore in Your Local Community," *Indiana History Bulletin*, November, 1982. (Available for 50 cents from the Indiana Historical Bureau, 140 North Senate, Indianapolis, IN 46204.)
Short introduction to identifying folklore on the local level. This article has been reproduced as an appendix to this workbook.

Burlakoff, Nikolai, and Carl Lindahl. "The Study of Folklore in Indiana: A Bibliography." In Linda Dégh, ed., *Indiana Folklore: A Reader*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980.
A very useful bibliography listing 439 published books and articles on Indiana folklore, with a subject index.

Indiana Communities Project. *Sharing Our Lives: A Handbook for Community Oral History and Folklore Research Projects.* Bloomington, 1982. (Available at a nominal cost from the Indiana University Folklore Institute, 504 North Fess, Bloomington, IN 47405.)
This handbook gives practical suggestions for beginning and carrying out a folklore project. It also explains the difference between folklore and oral history.

Ives, Edward D. *The Tape Recorded Interview: A Manual for Fieldworkers in Folklore and Oral History.* Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1980.
A slightly more detailed fieldwork manual, again with many practical suggestions for finding folklore, and keeping it on permanent record once you have found it.

Library of Congress, Archive of Folk Culture. "An Inventory of the Bibliographies and Other References and Finding Aids Prepared by the Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress." (Revised periodically)
A great "list of lists," this inventory is your guide to the numerous other bibliographies prepared by the Archive of Folk Culture. Available free of charge from the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540. You may wish to request one of the most useful of the many bibliographies available entitled "American Folklore: A Bibliography of Major Works."

4

The Folk Cultural Approach: Putting Folklore in Context

Objectives

- Understanding the concept of folk group and folk culture;
- Learning the difference between affinity folk groups and birthright folk groups;
- Recognizing a number of folk groups and their cultures existing around us; and
- Providing examples of the function of folklore within a folk culture.

Introduction

Learning to define, recognize the categories of, and find folklore in daily life are important lessons in the use of folklore in the classroom. Yet, without grasping the fact that folklore exists, not in a vacuum, but in the context of the lives of folk group members, the subject may seem like an isolated novelty instead of one of the fundamentals of our collective existence.

In this essay, Indiana University at Kokomo professor Xenia Cord details the function of folklore within various folk groups in Indiana, today and in times past. She explains how understanding the place of folklore in a group's daily life provides the essential extra step in learning to use folklore effectively in the classroom.

The Folk Cultural Approach: Putting Folklore in Context

Xenia E. Cord

Folklore is both a simple and complex field. Because no one is folklore-free, and because folklore is communication-oriented, we are all members of various and often overlapping folk groups, and we use folklore routinely, whether we recognize it as such or not. If we are to study folklore and use it as a teaching aid, we must be able to identify what it is: that is, to recognize its genres. Secondly, we must have some understanding of the context within which folklore functions — the **folk culture** within which folklore has meaning.

Our participation in a variety of groups — age, sex, race, occupation, religious affiliation, ethnic origin, interests — generates materials, behaviors, and skills which can be identified as group-specific folklore. As members of these groups we share, encourage, and transmit this folklore without an awareness of its classification or function, or even a conscious appreciation of its uniqueness. We tell jokes, use colloquial terms associated with the group's interests, share experiences, hold common beliefs, and participate in the casual transfer of the group's material from one person to another. Learning to identify, study, and formalize our understanding of the nature of folklore should not affect our enjoyment of, and participation in, the process of folklore communication.

Folklore **communication** is largely a spontaneous and often unconscious performance through which people share information, either by speech, action, or a combination of these. One person tells another a joke: he communicates orally, perhaps employing subtle changes in vocal pitch to suggest nuances, he uses facial expressions and gestures to emphasize the humor of the joke, and his very physical posture may suggest his anticipation of the listener's response. Or a traditional basketmaker teaches someone her skill: she shares the information by a combination of direct instruction, shared example, anecdotes, and physical action. While "communication" suggests a performer and an audience, the latter is not a requirement of folklore performance. A man may cane chairs without company; a woman may sing traditional ballads while doing dishes alone; a child may chant a jumprope rhyme while playing by herself. Only when the folklore is being shared with others can we speak of folklore communication.

Folklore groups can be divided into two types: affinity and birthright.

Affinity Folk Groups

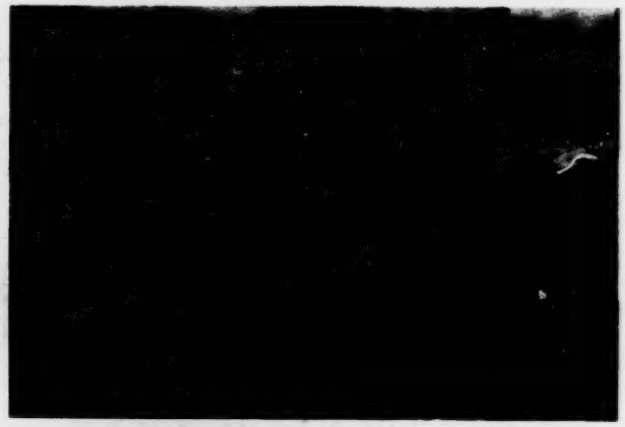
Affinity folk groups are those which are loosely organized around a particular interest that brings participants into voluntary association. The focus of the group remains fairly constant, while participants come and go. As we grow older, we move from one affinity group to another, participating in the activities and the folklore of the various groups. The distinction between the folklore and the activities of a group may blur. For instance, among children, who form one of the most cohesive and largest affinity folk groups, the activities of the group and its folklore are often indistinguishable.

As children participate in games which they pass on through folk methods (orally, or by observation and imitation), they generate folklore daily. They govern themselves, perhaps more strictly than if they were supervised by adults: even if they are somewhat arbitrary in setting their rules and punishments and boundaries, at least the majority is represented. As they play these games, children make rules, adjudicate in disputes, decide how to accept the variations in play introduced by new children from other areas, and admit younger children to the circle of peers. Among children, then, we can see the workings of a strong affinity folk culture.

Other examples of the types of folklore found within children's folk culture are abundant. Oral lore and written lore flourish among younger children. Some of the oral lore is attached to games: jumprope rhymes, "ready or not" rhymes, counting out rhymes ("Bubble gum, bubble gum, in a dish, how many pieces do you wish?"), and clapping rhymes can be collected in infinite variety. Grade school children are frequently excellent at telling ghost stories, and enjoy the opportunity to develop their storytelling skills. They are good at riddles, although the answers may seem inane to adults.[1] They enjoy bathroom humor and appreciate situations which dare them to try innocuous swear words. Girls in middle school often have secret and elaborate ways of determining if the current victim of their romantic attentions will return their interest, involving written formulas or the creation of fidelity tokens.

Children create their own forms of material culture as well. They are adept at making toys out of found materials, such as folded paper footballs, paperclip shooters, plastic straw whistles, or paper "cootie catchers." And all young adolescents and grade school children seem prone to adopt, fervently enjoy, and then discard such fads as small safety pins filled with multicolored beads arranged in patriotic or secretly meaningful color combinations.

As children grow, their narratives reflect new attitudes and concerns. Most teenagers tell, or at least know of, legends such as "Hookman" or "The Boyfriend's Death." You yourself may remember the first time you heard about the escaped maniac who could be identified because he had a hook instead of a right hand. In an appropriately scary setting you may have been told of the couple out "parking" who narrowly escaped the hookman's murderous intent, as they realized when they arrived home and discovered a bloody hook caught on the bumper or door handle of the car. Adolescents delight in frightening each other with this and other grisly horror legends.



Courtesy, Indiana Arts Commission.

As teens approach driving age, many of their legends focus on automobiles: how to get one, and what to do in it when you have it. A popular legend involves the 'Vette or Trans Am for sale locally (insert local dealer's name) for $250. It is ridiculously cheap because the previous owner died (of drugs, asphyxiation, heart attack, murder, or suicide) and the body was not discovered until it had decomposed. Because the odor cannot be removed from the car, it must be driven with the windows open. When you are young, and without money, this story has appeal. Many such stories are prevalent among junior high and high school students. For another discussion about the occurrence and function of such stories, see the essay entitled "Making Sense Out of Contemporary Phenomena" in this workbook.

While people of all ages enjoy celebrating calendar customs, children in particular are attracted to their observance. Many traditional aspects of calendar customs can be noted among children. Perhaps the most persistent traditional holiday no longer associated with formal religious observances is Halloween. Although it stems from a religious holiday, it has become a children's secular celebration, and the practice of costuming and begging, threatening tricks to those who do not assure their own protection with treats, is one of some duration in this country. Homemade costumes, neighborhood Halloween figures, pumpkin carving, and such activities as soaping windows and toilet-papering trees are examples of the folklore of Halloween, as practiced by younger children and adolescents.

Children and adolescents are two of the many affinity folk groups whose folk culture can be examined to understand better the function of folklore in daily life. As our interests, age, residence, and need to communicate change, we redirect our affiliations.

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[1] See John McDowell, *Children's Riddling*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979.

But, whatever their composition and focus, part of the constancy of affinity folk groups is their ability to maintain a viable identity concurrently with each other and with the mainstream popular culture.

Birthright Folk Groups

In addition to affinity groups, all of us are also involved to some degree in **birthright folk groups,** which are organized primarily around race, ethnic origin, language, and religion. Folk cultures involving birthright exist concurrently with affinity folk groups and with popular culture, but create and maintain a stronger sense of identity which often supercedes popular culture in importance, intensity, and conservatism.

In Indiana there are now, and there have been in the past, folk culture groups whose activities distinguish them from mainstream culture. Ethnic, racial, and religious culture groups have been a part of Indiana's diverse citizenry. Historically the folk culture groups found in Indiana are not unique to this state, but are common to other areas with similar migrational flow, immigrant patterns, and cultural influences. In this way, Indiana and her birthright folk groups can be observed as America in microcosm.

The dominant settlement pattern of the state was formed by Scots-Irish farmers from the Upland South. Indiana also has had settlements of major Algonquin tribes, of free blacks, of separatist and dissenting religious groups such as Quakers, Shakers, Rappites, Amish, and Mennonites, of successive waves of northern, southern, and eastern Europeans, of Hispanics, and more recently of Oriental peoples from Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam. As each group settled in Indiana, it attempted to establish a familiar context, and in so doing to continue a folk culture.

The people we most often think of as a group whose folk practices we should venerate and re-create are the Scots-Irish. As these people moved out of the uplands of the Carolinas, Virginia, western Maryland, Tennessee, and Kentucky into the old Northwest Territory, they established frontier or pioneer settlements building traditional forms out of available materials, using well-established methods of community cooperation and interaction to accomplish tasks that could not be done alone, and depending on their multi-generational and extended families to provide work force, tradition-sharing, and emotional support.

There is a tendency today to equate the lifestyle of Indiana's pioneers with "quaint and folksy" kinds of craft. We have already suggested that folk cultures represent a more conservative form of culture than that of the cultural majority. During the pioneer period of Indiana's history the lifestyle of the rural farmer was the **dominant** culture, even though it was also well-grounded in tradition. From our vantage point today the pioneer period seems to have been entirely traditional and conservative in its lifestyle; the danger in that sort of view is a tendency to over-romanticize and idealize the past.

In all aspects of living, members of any folk group prefer at times to choose folk forms of expression over popular culture. For example, the Amish, Mennonite, and Dunkard groups in Indiana can still be distinguished because they continue to live away from the modern world, maintaining largely unchanged clothing styles, religious practices, folk customs, foodways, transportation forms, and technology of 17th and 18th century Swiss and German cultures. Within these groups there are also divisions: one can find "house" Amish, "church" Amish, and Beachy Amish, depending on such things as where they hold their religious services and whether or not they are allowed automobile usage. The people who are members of these groups are warm and friendly to strangers from outside their culture, but they do not invite investigation into their lives by those who choose to see them as quaint and different; asking to do so may be considered a serious breach of etiquette.

Other religious groups that came into Indiana seeking religious freedom and ready land include the Quakers, the Swedenborgians, a small colony of Shakers near Terre Haute before the War of 1812, the Moravians who attempted Indian missions around Muncie, and the followers of George Rapp at New Harmony. Quaker culture was more cerebral than visual: as a group they had tremendous influence over the establishment of an education system in Indiana and their efforts on behalf of black settlers are well-known, but they did not create an observable folk culture which can be explored today. The Shaker community was of short duration, forced to disband because of the unhealthy climate of the Wabash lowlands and the increasing danger of Shawnee depredations. With the exception of any examples of Shaker artistry — baskets, furniture, spirit-writing — their folk cultural influence cannot be observed in Indiana. Moravians who sought to minister to the Indians had little luck with the Shawnee, who were turned away from Christianity by the Shawnee Prophet's proselytizing in favor of a pure Indian culture. Their efforts among the Delaware and Munsee tribes were more successful, but they ended with the Indian removals during the 1830s.

The Rappites, in contrast, made considerable impact on the wilderness of southwestern Indiana when they came. Little of their religious influence is seen today, but the structures they built have survived as excellent examples of restricted-group concepts and lifestyles. From the ground up, the structures they raised were different in technique, in construction detail, and in form from those of Anglo-American construction. Their spatial orientation on the land was different as well, and they might be studied by students interested in early successes with air conditioning and insulation, for instance. As a museum, New Harmony allows today's students to understand the strictures of communal living as it was practiced by the Rappites, and to consider the impulse that made people forsake comfort and follow a religious leader into the wilderness not once, but several times. Folk culture studies of such past charismatic movements may have valuable lessons for today's world.

A current religious group whose customs may be examined is, surprisingly enough, the Roman Catholics. Folk Catholicism differs from formal religious practice, and examining the experiences of children raised in Catholic schools, especially during earlier generations, will reveal a variety of stories in which children were encouraged or intimidated by the stories of martyred minor saints, or who were involved in various localized forms of childhood religious ritual such as playing nun or nailing a sibling (though his clothes) to a door to simulate the crucifixion.

Many communities have several ethnic Catholic churches, reflecting the heritage of the members. Since large numbers of Irish, Italian, and German Catholics immigrated to the state during the 19th century, each founded its own church and educational facility, based on differing forms of old country religious practices and on language. While these differences may not be so obvious today, the cultural heritage of a community may be suggested by the names of local Catholic churches.

Indiana is peopled with immigrants from all over the world. Early in the state's history there was a large influx of German Catholics, who settled in Indianapolis and along the southern tiers of counties, where they were prosperous farmers and impressed their institutions and their language on the landscape. Many of their folk architectural forms, customs, festivals, and other institutions have become one with the locality, so that they may no longer be recognized as unique. On the other hand, many essentially German forms were suppressed and abandoned during the virulent anti-German outbreak during World War I. Sauerkraut became "Liberty Cabbage," German parochial schools were forced to discontinue German language classes, and German language newspapers were forced to close so that the cities in which they were published, such as Evansville, would not lose their "all-American" status.

Gary was created early in the 20th century virtually overnight in response to the newly-established steel industry's need. It brought to the northwest part of the state southern and eastern Europeans of all nationalities. Some came as hopeful immigrants eager for Americanization, but unwilling to abandon deep-seated vestiges of their old customs and life. Others sought out their compatriots, forming communities within communities, where only the mother tongue was spoken and where the young came in contact only with others of their own background.

Carl Pulitier, an Italian, is a baker in Clinton, Vermillion County. Courtesy, Indiana Arts Commission.

Frequently the dream in these settlements was to earn prodigiously within the free enterprise system and then retire to the home country, where American wealth would pave the way to improved social status. Czechs, Slavs, Hungarians, Poles, Italians, Greeks, Lithuanians, and Sicilians all came to the industrialized northern part of Indiana and settled in neighborhood communities, re-creating their familiar social and cultural forms and maintaining their old-world customs, often with an overlay of Americanism through acculturation.

Later there were similar migrations of Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics. The first generation raised in this country as a rule chafed under the old-country customs, refused the language, and demanded to be "pure" Americans. Often the next generation developed an appreciation for the old heritage and turned back to it, adopting such customs, foodways, and celebrations as were compatible with their American way of life.

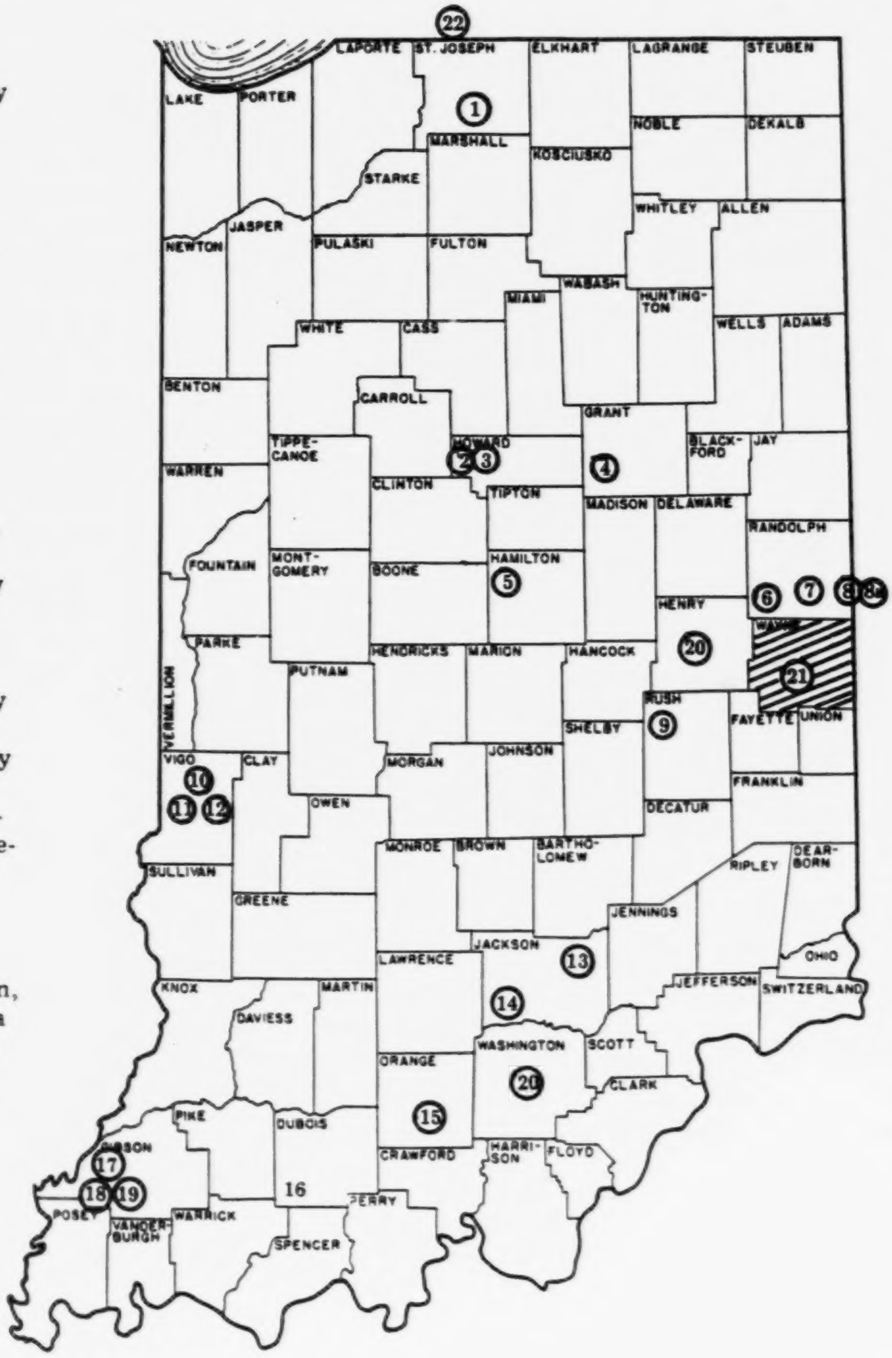
Elsewhere in the state are other enclaves of European extraction; a study of the surnames in any school offers a clue. If the group is large enough, it may have made a public event of any of its calendar customs, drawing attention to its old-world heritage and the forms it has adapted to the local setting. The observer of these patterns can collect from multi-generational families the customs of different European countries, comparing the changes and shifts in emphasis that take place from generation to generation. Those who are a part of any of these ethnic groups may wish to explore their heritage and to share it with others.

In Indiana there are small communities of Japanese, Chinese, Laotians, Thais, and Vietnamese. Anyone not familiar with the social forms of these cultures or any culture significantly different from his own, should make an effort to be informed before attempting to create a collecting situation. How many of us would know, for example, whether it is bad form to pat a Vietnamese child on the head, or whe-

Black Rural Communities in Indiana before 1860

1 - Huggart, St. Joseph County
2 - Bassett, Howard County
3 - Rush, Howard County
4 - Weaver, Grant County
5 - Roberts, Hamilton County
6 - Cabin Creek, Randolph County
7 - Snow Hill, Randolph County
8 - Greenville, Randolph County
8a - In Darke County, Ohio, the Greenville settlement continued without regard for state boundaries.
9 - Beech, Rush County
10 - Lost Creek, Vigo County
11 - Burnett, Vigo County
12 - Underwood, Vigo County
13 - Seymour, Jackson County
14 - Vallonia, Jackson County
15 - Lick Creek (Little Africa), Orange County
16 - Pinkston (Colored Freedom), Dubois County
17 - Lyles Station, Gibson County
18 - Roundtree, Gibson County
19 - Sand Hill, Gibson County
20 - Unidentified communities existed at some time in Henry and Washington counties.
21 - Wayne County had a generally distributed, and very large, black population that was apparently not settled into segregated communities, but lived for the most part on land owned by sponsoring or sympathetic Quakers.
22 - Calvin, Cass County, Michigan, was a haven for many Indiana blacks following the Fugitive Slave Law of 1851.

Map by Xenia E. Cord


(22)
LAPORTE
ST. JOSEPH
ELKHART
LAGRANGE
STEUBEN
LAKE
PORTER
①
NOBLE
DEKALB
MARSHALL
KOSCIUSKO
STARKE
WHITLEY
ALLEN
NEWTON
JASPER
PULASKI
FULTON
MIAMI
WABASH
HUNTINGTON
WHITE
CASS
WELLS
ADAMS
BENTON
CARROLL
GRANT
TIPPECANOE
HOWARD
②
③
④
BLACKFORD
JAY
WARREN
CLINTON
TIPTON
MADISON
DELAWARE
RANDOLPH
FOUNTAIN
MONTGOMERY
BOONE
HAMILTON
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PARKE
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MARION
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PUTNAM
VERMILLION
RUSH
⑨
FAYETTE
UNION
SHELBY
VIGO
⑩
⑪
⑫
CLAY
MORGAN
JOHNSON
FRANKLIN
OWEN
DECATUR
MONROE
BROWN
BARTHOLOMEW
SULLIVAN
RIPLEY
DEARBORN
GREENE
JENNINGS
JACKSON
LAWRENCE
⑬
OHIO
KNOX
MARTIN
⑭
JEFFERSON
SWITZERLAND
DAVIESS
WASHINGTON
SCOTT
ORANGE
⑳
CLARK
⑮
PIKE
DUBOIS
GIBSON
⑰
HARRISON
FLOYD
CRAWFORD
⑱
⑲
16
PERRY
POSEY
VANDERBURGH
WARRICK
SPENCER

ther it is acceptable to tap one's teeth with the eating utensils when dining with Japanese? Because there are relatively few members of these culture groups within Indiana, they are usually in contact with each other, frequently through native food restaurants or places where native ingredients may be purchased. In this way they attempt to maintain some degree of cultural integrity outside of the home and family.

Afro-Americans should not be overlooked as an important folk group in Indiana. As a part of their folk cultural heritage families may have stories of the bravery or defiance of slave ancestors, accounts of the ways in which these ancestors put down their white owners or managed to survive despite the brutality of the system. There may be objects of material culture maintained in the family which have survived from, and despite of, slavery times. These stories or these heirlooms may be called into use within the family when living in a predominantly white world seems difficult to bear.

On the other hand, there is also in Indiana a little-known group of black citizens with great pride in the fact that their ancestors were never slaves. Well before the Civil War free blacks from the South (which was becoming increasingly restive about the presence of blacks who were not slaves) migrated to Indiana and formed rural communities. Indiana was scarcely more hospitable to these settlers than the South had been; nevertheless, they stayed and prospered, becoming well-to-do farmers and remaining in their rural settlements until after the turn of the century, when industrialization increasingly pulled the younger members into the cities. Today most of those rural communities have been abandoned, but the descendants usually located in nearby communities. These descendants can be interviewed for their memories about these truly unique Indiana settlers. Abandoned or not, most of these locations contain cemeteries, including the graves of a number of black Revolutionary War veterans, many Civil War soldiers, and the graves of those who served in subsequent wars.[2]

A growing awareness and appreciation of the folk cultures once present and currently existing in Indiana opens the way for a variety of stimulating and informative classroom projects, while at the same time creating an understanding of folklore as a communication process. A study of any folk culture involves studying the traditions and the patterns underlying the communication process. In the classroom, students who are involved in an understanding of their own or another's folk culture become aware that their heritage is something of value.

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[2] Black rural communities in Indiana included the Roberts Settlement in northern Hamilton County, the Beech Settlement in Rush County, the Bassett and Rush communities in Howard County, Lost Creek in Vigo County, Lyles Station in Gibson County, three large settlements in Randolph County called Cabin Creek, Snow Hill, and Greenville, and Weaver in Grant County. In Calvin, Michigan, just north of South Bend, there is a similar community to which many Indiana blacks moved following the Fugitive Slave Law of 1851. In Ohio, just east of Randolph County, Indiana, the Greenville settlement continued without regard for state boundaries, just as much folklore does. Readers who have information about these or other settlements are invited to contact the author.

Key Works

Blair, Don. *Harmonist Construction.* Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1964.
This short study of the organization and physical construction of Harmonie by George Rapp's followers details the effects of communal effort and German traditional land use and construction technique on the Indiana pioneer landscape.

Cord, Xenia E., and Susanne S. Ridlen, eds. *Collage.* I, 1981; II, 1982; III, 1983; IV, 1984. Kokomo: Indiana University at Kokomo.
This annual folklore journal of student papers and professional commentary suggests the wide range of topics possible for investigation by students who are at home in their own culture. Back issues are available from the editors; current issue, from the bookstore. Contact both c/o Indiana University at Kokomo, 2300 South Washington, Kokomo, IN 46902.

Dorson, Richard M. *Land of the Millrats.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.
Urban industrial folklore is examined in this threefold investigation of the folklore of steel, of blacks, and of Puerto Ricans in the Gary/Calumet area.

Hostetler, John A. *Amish Society.* 3rd edition. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.
This in depth study by an insider is of primary importance for those anticipating cultural contact and for anyone wishing to gain an appreciation for this unworldly, reserved religious group.

Knapp, Mary and Herbert. *One Potato, Two Potato; the Secret Education of American Children.* N.Y.: W. W. Norton, 1976.
The Knapps have collected and analyzed (with extensive historical reference) children's folklore, usefully categorizing it by contemporary psychological function within a children's cultural context.

Morgan, Kathryn. *Children of Strangers.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980.
This study of the author's black family folklore offers insights into the uses of folklore to insulate against cruelty and indifference, and its value in the development of family pride.

Children's Folklore – How Do Children Play?

Age: These projects may be adapted to many age groups, but are probably most effective when developed for students ages 7-15.

Objectives:

- acronym IDEA: to help students
  Isolate, Distinguish, Examine, and Appreciate
  their own folklore
- to become aware of themselves as valued members of folk groups
- to learn to recognize certain kinds of group folklore
- to understand that spontaneous variation is a natural occurrence in folklore as it is communicated among children
- to help teachers recognize some of the motivations and concerns underlying children's folklore and see evidence of the influence of contemporary media and current events

Things needed: Recording equipment of several sorts is necessary for accurate compilation of folklore. If your facility has video-taping capabilities, the recording of action folklore such as jumping or clapping games will allow recording of a full range of expression. Tape recorders and photography equipment are useful for recording descriptions of spontaneous games in which large outdoor areas constitute the playing area. For consistent recording of any spontaneous game, a questionnaire covering rules, exceptions, player organization and participation, equipment, playing area, and other aspects, may be developed as a classroom exercise (see sample).

Instructions:

The teacher should initiate a discussion of children's games after reading Mary and Herbert Knapp, *One Potato, Two Potato: The Secret Education of American Children* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976). Students should be guided to an understanding that their spontaneous games, as examples of folklore, are traditional, oral, anonymously created, formularized, and exist in variation.

- Divide the class into groups, either by sex or into working groups. Each group is to collect one kind of children's game, i.e., clapping games, rhymes, games involving a leader and response group such as "Mother, May I," or "Red Light, Green Light." (Older students may prefer to work in pairs.)
- Groups may collect from within the group, from other peers within the class, from other peers within the school, from other peers within the community. Groups may collect first from peers and then from another age group, doing a comparison of past and present.

- If anyone in the class has a pen pal, initiate a folklore exchange with students in another school/town/state/country. Perhaps the classroom teacher can set up such an exchange with a comparable class in another location. Compare the results of games from your area and the other. What variations are evident? What similarities are there?
- As a class project, perform a sample of the games collected and videotape the performance. Share the recordings with other classes, an exchange group, the local library, a senior citizens group. Or, do a live presentation.
- Investigate games which are played with objects made by the players (cootie catchers, paper footballs, paperclip or rubber band shooters). Interview parents and grandparents about the toys they made when they were children. Learn how to make some of these toys and demonstrate them, or have a parent/grandparent demonstrate.

Questionnaire for Children's Games – A Sample

1. Name of Game
   (alternate names?)
2. Minimum/maximum number of players
3. Organization of players:
   a. even teams
   b. leader/group
   c. "It"/group
   d. equal individuals
   e. player(s)/observer(s)
   f. other
4. Time of year/day/night the game is usually played
5. Playing area/boundaries:
   a. indoor
   b. outdoor
6. Equipment needed (if equipment is homemade, describe its construction):
7. Play/rules of game:
   a. how is leader/"It"/initial sequence decided?
   b. how does play proceed?
   c. how is equipment used?
   d. do formula statements/verses/calls accompany play?
   e. are "time outs" allowed and how indicated?
   f. is score kept, and how?
   g. how does play end?
   h. how are rule-breakers dealt with?
8. Diagram playing area and position of players

Family Participation in Calendar Events

Age: 4th grade up (adaptable for younger students)

Objectives:

- recognizing the role of calendar customs in family life
- investigating familiar culture for folkloric elements
- "fitting" one's self into traditional culture

Instructions:

- The teacher may follow one of the topics suggested here or pick another calendar event (Thanksgiving, ethnic holiday such as Saint's Day, etc.) appropriate to the make-up of the school population and age level of students.
- Students should be encouraged to collect information about their personal, family method of celebrating these events, and share this information in some way with the class, through a composition, oral report, bulletin board, or demonstration.
- For a year-long project, several seasonal events could be assigned, or each student could report on his/her birthday (adoption day, name day).

Suggested Topics:

- An event which is internal to family activities is the celebration of birthdays or adoption days or name days. Children may individually or in groups investigate their own customs regarding birthdays. How is the celebration treated? Is the day considered special? Does the celebrant get any special consideration, i.e., is he/she excused from chores, allowed to sleep late or stay up late, receive any other special marks of favor? Does he/she choose the components of the main meal or the flavor of the birthday cake? Is there a birthday cake or other treat? Does he/she take a treat (what kind) to school? What special treatment from peers at school is anticipated? Are gifts a part of the family's celebration? When and how are they given? What else is done on this special day?

- Halloween is perhaps the only secular holiday widely celebrated by American children, and it is full of tradition. Unless the class is represented by fundamentalist religious group members or others who object to Halloween as non-Christian, the celebration may be studied to advantage. Some aspects to consider include costuming, internal and outdoor decorations, tricks and treats, "haunted" houses, and Halloween practices of the past. A photo-essay of carved pumpkin faces may be an interesting project for some, while others may photograph Halloween "dummies," ghosts, and other decorative figures. Why do people make these figures, and for whom? Parents and grandparents may remember a time when several evenings prior to Halloween were called "Gate Night," and "Cabbage Night." Students might interview older family members about the purpose of these nights, and the pranks played then. Costuming involves another large area of inquiry. Are homemade costumes better than purchased costumes? What kinds of costumes are most popular in each category (e.g., homemade ghost or pirate costumes, purchased "Spider Man" or "Star Wars" character costumes). Children may also be directed into a profitable discussion of why they like to dress up and go out offering "trick or treat" in the dark. Is Halloween a family activity, a commercial event, a directed activity in which civic groups/leaders control and direct the celebration?

Investigating a Folk Culture

Age: 4th grade up, to be adapted to the level of students

Objectives:

Many of the students in your classes are members of birthright folk culture groups. These students may be perceived as minority group members, or as a marginal part of the community's structure. Such students can be assisted in

- **Isolating** their unique cultural heritage from mainstream popular culture,
- **Distinguishing** their groups' common heritage as a system they can recognize,
- **Examining** their own traditions, and
- **Appreciating** the coherence of their tradition.

This sharing may bring academically or socially withdrawn students into the mainstream. Other students may learn to understand and appreciate the divergent cultures from which their peers come, while sharing their own traditions.

Suggested projects (read Dorson, *Millrats*, and/or Hostetler):

- Begin an investigation of different cultural backgrounds by examining students' last names for clues to ethnic origins, old family occupations, early loyalties. Local cemeteries may suggest ethnic orientation. Ask among the students if any live in ethnic neighborhoods or communities, or if they are racially united with others who share their heritage. (Cross-cultural and cross-racial adoptions may affect this kind of investigation.) Once a folk group — or several — have been identified, students who are participants may investigate such aspects as foodways, language, ethnic crafts, ethnic celebrations, and religion. They may wish to bring examples to class, or to have adults come in to demonstrate.
- Awareness of a folk culture group in the community may provide an opportunity for investigation and education. Students may divide into teams. The classroom teacher may wish to initiate contact with the folk community, or may initiate a newspaper interview in which the students' projects are described. Once the folk community understands the students' need to understand, it may welcome teams into the area. One student may wish to interview an informant and ask questions while the other operates the recording equipment and takes pictures. Later they may trade places. The material they collect should be used to help students understand the different cultural backgrounds from which people come.

- All of us came to this country from someplace else unless we have American Indian ancestors. Students can do a personal genealogy, asking available relatives how the family decided to immigrate, where they came from, what sorts of problems and situations they had to overcome in the process of acculturation. If the immigration occurred in the distant past the students may also do historical research to determine, if they can, what social, political, economic, and/or religious situations might have led to the immigration. Students unable to do this sort of research on their own backgrounds may be able to find a recent immigrant whose decision to relocate can be sensitively investigated.

Helpful Publications:

The American Association for State and Local History, P. O. Box 40983, Nashville, TN 37204, has two publications useful in this exercise, F. Wilbur Helmbold, *Tracing Your Ancestry*, and a companion workbook, *Tracing Your Ancestry Logbook*. This organization also publishes individual technical leaflets, several of which may be useful in this exercise:

(014)	*Genealogical Research: A Basic Guide*
(108)	*Ethnic Groups, Part One: Research for the Local Society*
(109)	*Ethnic Groups, Part Two: Activities for the Local Society*
(123)	*Using Oral History for a Family Project*
(135)	*Black Genealogy: Basic Steps to Research*
(138)	*Jewish Genealogy: An Annotated Bibliography*

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board foot (a running foot one inch thick). In an average 12 inch by 12 inch by 24 foot log there are 288 board feet; if they average 4 pounds per foot, then each timber weighs nearly 1,200 pounds. Obviously one man could not raise a log alone, nor could he handle one on the ground by himself. Let the dwelling grow more than one story, and even a team of men would have difficulty. Obviously, the erection of any log structure would have to be a cooperative project.

The county in which you live may have some log structures. While log structures are not as prevalent on the landscape as in years past, it is quite possible to discover them converted into vegetable stands, antique shops, additions to frame houses, or storage sheds. The most conspicuous feature of a log house or barn is its corner-timbering or corner-notching (see illustrations), which is the means for locking the logs together without the use of nails. The half-dovetail notch is the most commonly used of the traditional methods for producing a corner-timbered joint and is seen frequently in Indiana and other parts of the Midwest.

Another important means of construction is frame construction, a very old building method in Europe and in the English seaboard settlements. The timber used for the massive framing must be straight, and the pieces are joined together by a **mortise and tenon joint**. The mortise is the notch or hole that is cut into the wood into which the tenon is inserted. A hole is drilled through the mortise and tenon; the joint is anchored by driving a dried square peg, or trunnel, into the round hole. As the square peg absorbed moisture and swelled to normal size, the corners became tight. In spite of the old adage that "you can't put a square peg in a round hole," this method of securing the joint is very successful. Although the process of hewing the log is the same for both log and frame construction, a mortise and tenon joint for securing corners always denotes frame construction and never log construction. Heavy frame construction for houses became obsolete in the second half of the 19th century when mill-cut lumber came in, but it lasted in barn construction well into the 20th century. Since barns are not finished on the inside, the heavy frames can be easily studied.

Around 1830 **balloon framing** was devised — the 2 inch by 4 inch type of frame construction of which most houses today are built. This contemporary type of framing, using much smaller and lighter lumber set closely together, began to be important for dwellings after 1850. Barns continued to be heavily framed for another 75 years or more.

Whether the construction is of log, frame, or any other readily available local material, many traditional house types are found throughout Indiana (see illustrations). Pattern becomes apparent in house types, so that we may learn to identify certain kinds of folk houses by the fact that they demonstrate bilateral tripartite symmetry: the front of the house can be divided visually either into two equal halves, or into three equal parts with the right and left sides mirroring each other and the center regular but singular. The two story form, such as an "I" house, will show an equal number (usually an odd number) of openings which match on each floor across the front of the house. A student project may focus on a distributional study of a single house type, such as the I house or the "shotgun" house, or the student may choose to do an in-depth investigation of a single house, perhaps his/her own.

The Chick house and log barn, moved and restored for the Cass County Historical Society, Logansport, Indiana. See the Key Works, Ridlen, "Preservation of Community History and Tradition," for a complete discussion. Photographs courtesy, Susanne S. Ridlen.

Barns also offer interesting studies that hold clues to the past. The **bank barn** is an easily recognized structure on the Indiana landscape, especially in the northern two thirds of the state. A bank barn is a two-level building, with the lower level used for stabling and the upper level, reached by a ramp, used for hay and grain storage. Frequently the barn was built into a hillside, but if no hillside was available, an artificial hill or ramp was constructed for the barn. If studying barns, the student should learn not only the parts of the barn, how they are used, and what tasks

FOLKLORE AND SUBJECT AREAS

5

Folklore, English, and Language Arts

Objectives

- Understanding the relationships and differences between oral literature and written literature;
- Learning a means for identifying the folklore elements within published literature;
- Identifying non-narrative folklore related to the study of literature and language arts; and
- Recognizing the unique position of folk speech in the study of language.

Introduction

Catherine Swanson, folklorist and poet, in this essay discusses some of the common properties of folklore, literature, and language and the ways in which the subjects may complement each other. Her discussion involves a broad range of ways English and language arts teachers may incorporate folklore into their courses, including recognizing the characteristics of folk narrative in formal literature, studying short oral forms such as proverbs, and examining folk speech variations.

The exercises at the end of the essay are particularly useful for stimulating student writing and encouraging students to read with more interest.

Folklore, English, and Language Arts

Catherine Swanson

Because many folklore genres rely on the use of words, the study of folklore and the study of English and language arts make good companions. Many people believe that folklore deals mainly with stories, and so, folklore is often called "oral literature" and is considered a rudimentary form of sophisticated literature. But not all folklore is literature, and even when folklore is similar to literature — in the sense that it is a narrative or involves the artistic use of words — it is also different from literature.

Written literature attempts to treat universal themes and events of human experiences in new and interesting ways. Folklore, on the other hand, deals with these same themes and events by using patterned, often very formulaic, techniques. Whereas written literature avoids stock situations and trite phrases, folklore is based on "tried and true" verbal expressions.

When a story or phrase becomes tried and true through its existence in oral tradition, it is not necessarily passed on to other people by rote; rather, each telling is a re-creation of the story along broad traditional guidelines. The basic framework of a story will stay the same while specific details are changed or omitted, creating many versions, or variants, of the same story. This process is enhanced by the use of traditional devices such as the phrase "once upon a time," or the use of threes (in some cultures) as in "The Three Bears" or three heroic feats to gain a reward.

Because literature and folklore share the same fundamental subject matter — human experience — and because folkloristic content can often be found in modern literature, it is useful to know something about the ways in which folk narrative differs from literary forms like the novel and short story.

Folk narrative patterning depends in part on traditional words and phrases that signal the listener (or reader) that a story is now in progress. They also allow a story, or sometimes a song, to be performed in many variant forms without losing the traditional framework. These "once-upon-a-time-and-they-live-happily-ever-after" kinds of phrases are called oral formulas. There are other kinds of oral formulas as well: choruses, refrains, and metrical devices. Folklorists have discovered the existence of oral formulas even in what were originally thought to be written stories. One well-known case is the discovery of formulaic devices in Homer's *Odyssey*, an epic now considered to have been based on stories that existed in oral tradition at the time of its writing.

The internal structure (the plot) of folk narratives may also be patterned. A folklorist who surveyed traditional fairytales discovered that thirty-one potential episodes could occur in the tales, and although each episode did not occur in every tale, those that did always occurred in the same order.[*] In other words, sequence is important in folk narrative. These episodes are set off here for convenient reference.

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[*] Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968.

Potential Episodes in Tales

1. One of the members of a family absents himself from home.
2. A warning or order is addressed to the hero.
3. The warning is violated.
4. The villain makes an attempt at reconnaissance.
5. The villain receives information about his victim.
6. The villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take possession of him or of his belongings.
7. The victim submits to deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy.
8. The villain causes harm or injury to a member of a family, or one member of a family either lacks something or desires to have something.
9. Misfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command; he is allowed to go or he is dispatched.
10. The seeker agrees to or decides upon counteraction.
11. The hero leaves home.
12. The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc., which prepares the way for his receiving either a magical agent or helper.
13. The hero reacts to the actions of the future helper.
14. The hero acquires the use of a magical agent.
15. The hero is transferred, delivered, or led to the whereabouts of an object of search.
16. The hero and the villain join in direct combat.
17. The hero is branded.
18. The villain is defeated.
19. The initial misfortune or lack is eradicated.
20. The hero returns.
21. The hero is pursued.
22. Rescue of the hero from pursuit.
23. The hero, unrecognized, arrives home or in another country.
24. A false hero presents unfounded claims.
25. A difficult task is proposed to the hero.
26. The task is resolved.
27. The hero is recognized.
28. The false hero or villain is exposed.
29. The hero is given a new appearance.
30. The villain is punished.
31. The hero is married and ascends the throne.

In addition to the fact that folktales seem to follow a certain sequence of events, they also conform to other stylistic conventions: formulaic openings and closings, the use of repetition for emphasis, the contrast of opposites (e.g., good and evil, big and small), concentration of the plot on one leading character, and the tendency to involve magic or miraculous events in the action.

Everything mentioned so far makes folk narrative simple and familiar, easy to recognize, remember, and retell. Consequently, in terms of popular appeal, folk narrative can sometimes have an edge over sophisticated written literature. Its predictability and familiarity make it available to a wider audience. Perhaps for just this reason, folk narrative's thematic and stylistic characteristics are sometimes borrowed for use in modern form. Compare, for instance, the thirty-one episodes listed with the screenplays of movies like "Star Wars" and "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom."

We should not overlook the fact that oral tradition is the backbone of folklore. The telling of a tale is its life. Many of us know or have heard about a person whose conversational skills include entertaining stories used to make a point. The point may be a commentary on life and people or the recounting of personal experiences and history. These stories are a traditional way of communicating that is both artful and meaningful.

The art of professional storytelling is a modern adaptation of this traditional method of communication. Storytelling once functioned as the primary means of educating and socializing both children and adults. Today storytelling appears to be primarily a form of entertainment, yet even the most stylized fairytale can contain social messages. Although most professional storytellers are removed from the folklore process, many of them try to make their performances reflect the flavor of traditional tale telling. Some of these storytellers are members of the traditional society whose stories they tell, and they can provide interpretation about the function of the stories in everyday life.

Sometimes the flavor of traditional storytelling can be found in written literature as well. Mark Twain has given us several examples, one of which is his story, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," which combines elements of the tall tale, personal experience story, and dialect to produce entertaining reading.

Of course, not all folklore is narrative. An example of non-narrative folklore is the proverb. Proverbs and proverbial phrases are still a part of everyday conversation. They are really folk metaphors; they shorten lengthy explanations into catchy phrases and put specific situations into the realm of collective wisdom. For example, a person who is thinking of buying a lamp at a yard sale but who is unable to determine if the lamp works might be advised by a friend to "look before you leap." Another friend, however, may suggest, "Nothing ventured, nothing gained." Of course, the buyer will have to decide for himself which brand of folk wisdom to consider!

Proverbs, like other forms of folklore, are based on traditional assumptions about the nature of things. Not everyone views the world in quite the same way, but most people who share a common culture will also share ideas about what life should be. These common assumptions are often expressed in proverbial form. In an article on this subject (see the Key Works at the end of this chapter), one folklorist presents examples of proverbs expressing American ideals of hard work, equality, and unlimited good: "You get what you pay for," "Anyone can be President," or "There's more where that came from."

Some forms of verbal folklore are not highly structured and seem to flow effortlessly from personal experience and everyday life. When we listen to a person tell about a major historical event in his or her own words, we are getting an individual and personal account that puts the event into human perspective. It is traditional to tell these stories (or stories about colorful characters in a community or other personal anecdotes) over and over again in social situations. The same is true for family history. It is one thing to know something about where we "come from." It is quite another to know particulars about the lives of our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. These narratives, in their many manifestations over time, become the saga of our lives and living proof of the age-old need to tell the story.

Folk speech is one of the most personal forms of language tradition. Most of us are not acutely aware of the regionalisms and folk patterns in our everyday speaking habits. For example, does one call a carbonated drink a "soda," a "soda pop," or simply a "pop" or a "coke" (used generically)? Speech patterns reveal regional, ethnic, and occupational affiliation. They develop in the same way that other traditions develop; that is, they emerge over time in response to the special circumstances of a particular group of people.

But folk speech is more than the mere evidence of history. It is also something that carries great symbolic meaning. America is a complex, pluralistic society in which a person has primary affiliations at home or in church and also many potential secondary affiliations at school, work, or in social organizations. The speech patterns of special groups promote group identity and group cohesion or accentuate differences. Consequently, when truckers say that they are "running hot" until they spot a "smokie," they are doing more than saying that they are driving fast until they see a state trooper. They are making this statement in a specialized language, a jargon, that only some people will understand, thereby increasing the distinctiveness of truck drivers (or c.b. operators) as a group. Occasionally, the speech patterns — especially the jargon — will capture public imagination and become part of popular culture. This has certainly been true of trucker's jargon as well as jargon from the world of pop music or adolescence.

Besides regionalisms (e.g., skillet/frying pan, pop/soda, plural you/y'all, just to name a few) and jargon, folk speech also includes **dialect**, or what might be called folk pronunciation and folk grammar. Dialect, of course, is often associated with region, but it may also reflect urban/rural life or immigrant/nativeborn experience. Some of us may have had the experience of visiting a new part of the country only to be confused by local pronunciations. An example close to home is the local pronunciation of the city name, Louisville. The local pronunciation almost defies rendering in typeface, but is something close to "Luh-vul."

It is sometimes easy to confuse folk speech patterns with ignorance or laziness on the part of the speaker. Of course, we all need to be able to communicate with each other, and this need demands that we learn our language. Yet, at the same time, we should also be aware of the fact that folk speech is the traditional component of language and has the tenacity of any tradition; it persists because there is a need for it. To overlook, misunderstand, or write off folk speech because "one should know better" is to run the risk of missing one of the most colorful, artistic aspects of American expressive culture.

Key Works

Brunvand, Jan Harold. *The Study of American Folklore.* 2nd edition. N.Y.: W.W. Norton, 1978.
Brunvand has chosen to organize the folklore genres he discusses into three groupings: oral, customary, and material. He provides an introduction to the field of folklore and also the study of folklore. In addition, he discusses the nature of folk groups in various segments of American society.

Chase, Richard. *The Jack Tales.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1943.
These variants of jack tales, a cycle of American folktales, were collected from informants in North Carolina in the 1930s. The book also contains an afterword by a folklorist, Herbert Halpert. See also Chase's *Grandfather Tales.*

Dundes, Alan. "Folk Ideas as Units of Worldview," in Richard Bauman and Americo Paredes, eds., *Toward New Perspectives in Folklore*, 93-103. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972.
Dundes discusses "folk ideas" or underlying assumptions that guide everyday life and are the traditional underpinnings of that life.

Folktales of the World Series. Richard M. Dorson, General Editor. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Each book in this series concerns the study of folktales in that country. Individual volumes exist for Chile, China, England, France, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Mexico, and Norway.

Lang, Andrew. *Red Fairy Tale Book.* N.Y.: Viking Press, 1976. Original edition, 1890.
Andrew Lang, a well-known folklorist of the 19th century, compiled several collections of folktales, each one a different color: red, green, blue, pink, and yellow. This volume includes favorites such as "Rapunzel," "Jack and the Beanstalk," and "The Twelve Dancing Princesses" and also contains Lang's introduction to the 1890 edition.

MacDonald, Margaret Read. *The Storyteller's Sourcebook: A Subject, Title, and Motif Index to Folklore Collections for Children.* Detroit: Neal-Shuman, Inc., and Gale Research, 1982.
This good resource for folktales and other folk narratives is arranged in a manner similar to the Motif Index of Folk Literature used by folklorists. This book does not contain stories, but it tells the user where to find them.

Twain, Mark (Samuel Clemens). "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," in James E. Miller, *et al.*, eds., *The American Literary Tradition, 1607-1899*, pp. 222-24. Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1976.
This comical and folksy story by one of America's greatest writers can be found in a variety of sources. This one is a publication from a well-known textbook publisher.

Writing One

Age: high school, middle school

Objectives:

- to encourage development of writing skills
- to stimulate appreciation for folklore as material for creative or expository writing

Instructions:

This is an exercise in writing from interview notes.

- Have students pick a topic from the list below.
- Students should interview one person (e.g., family member, classmate, neighbor) and take notes.
- Based on these notes, students should choose to write an essay, a poem, or a short story.

Suggested topics:

My grandparent's house
A favorite heirloom
My family's favorite holiday celebration
A spooky experience
Making biscuits
Small town life
The legend of . . . .
A family saying and how it came to be
How I got my nickname
A family reunion
How my town got its name
Planting by the signs
Fall harvest
Student's choice (must be OK'd by teacher)

Writing Two

Age: elementary school

Objectives:

- to promote appreciation of folktales
- to encourage development of writing skills and artistic skills

Instructions:

- Read a short folktale to the class.
- Have students illustrate the story on large sheets of paper.
- Underneath each illustration, have students write a short caption.
- Punch holes in the paper and tie together with yarn or ribbon.
- The teacher may want to read more than one folktale to the students and have the students make one illustration for each folktale read. The various illustrations may be tied together to form a folktale book.

Reading One

Age: high school

Objectives:

- **to encourage appreciation of folklore**
- **to provide students with practice in perceiving folklore themes and structure in modern form**
- **to encourage reading**

Instructions:

1. Discuss the definition of folklore and its various genres with students.
2. Ask students to find one example of folklore content or structure in a modern form. Some suggestions are:
   - a popular song in ballad form
   - use of dialect or regionalisms in a novel, short story, or poem (suggestions for this example include any of the fiction of Mark Twain, the novels of Willa Cather, and the works of Indiana author Jean Shepard. School or local librarians may have other suggestions, appropriate to various grade levels)
   - a play, movie plot, or television program that contains elements of the folktale, especially some of the 31 potential episodes discussed in this chapter
3. Students should be able to explain (orally or in writing) why their example is a use of folklore in a modern form.
4. The teacher or students may think of other ideas not on the suggested list.

Reading Two

Age: middle school

Objectives:

- to encourage reading
- to provide students with an opportunity to appreciate folklore in their own community

Instructions:

1. Discuss the definition of folklore and its various genres with the students.
2. Have each student keep a newspaper clipping scrapbook in which he or she keeps newspaper clippings that relate to folklore.
3. Students should make at least one entry per week for twelve weeks.
4. Encourage the students to read the newspaper daily.
5. Suggested sources for clippings:
    local newspaper
    magazines
    programs from community events
    school newspaper
    promotional material
    other printed sources

Performing

Age: high school, middle school

Objectives:

- to promote appreciation of folklore
- to provide students with performance experience

Instruction:

- **Folklore Extemporaneous**
  1. Divide the class into teams with four students on each team.
  2. Place pieces of paper containing the names of folktales and legends or the texts of proverbs in a box.
  3. Have one student from each team draw a piece of paper from the box.
  4. The teams each have 15 minutes to prepare a skit based on the item they have drawn from the box.
  5. Students are allowed to refer to the text of their folktale or legend during their preparation.
  6. Skits are then performed for the class.
- **Folklore Dramatization**
  1. Choose a folktale or legend to dramatize for other classes or for the school.
  2. This is a cooperative effort. Some students will act, others will work on the production crew.
  3. Tasks include:
     actors
     playwright
     director
     costume coordinator
     prop coordinator
     technical (lights, recorded music, curtain)
     accompaniment
     publicity
     etc.

6

Folklore, History, and Social Studies

Objectives

- Realizing the close correlation between the study of history, social studies, and folklore materials;
- Perceiving the many facets of family history and folklore;
- Learning the basics of folk architecture and its use in understanding the life of the past; and
- Recognizing some of the many other local resources available for the study of folklore, history, and social studies.

Introduction

In this essay, Indiana University at Kokomo professors Xenia E. Cord and Susanne S. Ridlen outline several ways folklore may be used in the history and social studies classroom. A number of these suggestions have been used successfully by the two professors in their beginning folklore courses. The suggestions stress the use of resources found close to home, including the family, local craftspeople and other tradition bearers, architecture, and cemeteries. This essay should be used in conjunction with the essay entitled "Using Local Resources" in this workbook.

Since history and social studies are subjects closely related to the study of folklore in general, teachers of these subjects will benefit from the other essays in this workbook as well.

Folklore, History, and Social Studies

Xenia E. Cord and Susanne S. Ridlen

One of the characteristics of folklore is its base in tradition. Tradition may have a time depth of a century or more, or be as contemporary as yesterday's news. Therefore, the study of folklore relates directly to both history and social studies. Using folklore materials in history and social studies can broaden a student's understanding of both subjects, adding a personal dimension to these studies, and helping to clear up the mysteries of the lives of those who came before us.

Since history and social studies are, in themselves, such broad fields, we cannot begin to suggest ways to use folklore materials in all facets of these studies. Instead, we will concentrate on three aspects, all of which are useful for the study of local and Indiana history and social studies. Other essays in this workbook may help teachers of history and social studies find more uses for folklore in their subjects, particularly those entitled "Making Sense Out of Contemporary Phenomena" and "Using Local Resources."

The three areas covered here are Family History and Folklore, History and Material Culture Studies, and Community History Projects.

Family History and Folklore

Many family history projects have been executed successfully by history and social studies classes, and the valuable aspects of these projects are numerous. An intangible result of a family folklore project for student collectors is a growing realization that their parents, grandparents, or others they interview are real people and not merely elderly appendages to modern life. Students gain insight into the recent historical past as it was lived by members of the family and come to appreciate the family as a nurturing unit. In addition, the tangible result of a written document containing the collected material is that it becomes a valued addition to family memorabilia. Students often choose to augment this type of project with appropriate old photographs, family documents, and other treasures, creating carefully compiled albums for family use.

The following suggestions for subjects to cover in a family history project stress that such a project should go far beyond the usual genealogy to probe all aspects of a family's past. A well-rounded project will not only help students learn much about their family background and its place in history at large, but also will teach them a great deal about the nature of folklore in general. For other discussions of family folklore, see the essays entitled "Finding Folklore" and "Folklore in Domestic Life" in this workbook.

Oral traditions bind the family unit and record the family's personal past. Many families have stories which explain the source of their fortunes or misfortunes, pointing with pride to a lucky or unlucky incident in the history of the family without which the family fortunes would have been far different.

A family story may describe how Indian ancestors once owned a large portion of land in the family's home county, but lost it through unfair treaties; or a belief may exist in the family that a wealthy ancestor had a hidden gold mine, the location of which has never been discovered. Perhaps there is a story of the relative who hit a jackpot in Las Vegas with his last quarter, or a tale of a cheaply acquired painting that turned out to be a priceless masterpiece.

Families may share stories about a rascally or pranksterish relative, or may be reluctant to reveal a proverbial skeleton in the closet. Families may treasure anecdotes about an ancestor's bravery or courage in difficult times. Stories about lost loves, unusual courtships, unique marriage ceremonies or incidents at the wedding, arranged marriages, elopements, jilted brides (and grooms), and other anecdotes may enliven the response to a question about how various couples in the family met and married. Different family members may share these anecdotes from different points of view, making an interesting comparative study.[1]

Photographs have tremendous impact on oral reminiscence; family pictures are instant reminders of the past and allow people to re-create whole experiences by transforming the past into the present. Family folklore can easily be collected by sitting down with a relative and sharing a photo album or a box of pictures. As the collector asks to have the subjects and events of each picture identified, the family member may describe in detail incidents and anecdotes from the past. This is also a good time to attach the names of those pictured to each photograph. Most people take pictures at moments of significance: a family party or celebration, a graduation, the purchase of a new car, a birth, a wedding, sometimes a funeral, when a child does something precocious, when the family goes on vacation. Reviewing these visual memories may create responses beginning, "Oh, that was the time we . . . . " Other family memorabilia may create similar responses. Immigration cards, deeds, diplomas, military service records, a family Bible, an old sampler, a hand-carved chest or other heirloom may trigger treasured family accounts.

A student may also investigate his family's oral heritage by focusing on a time period, a place, or a special occupation held by someone in the family. If a family member remembers living through the Depression and can describe some of the economic measures taken by the family during this time, the decade of the 1930s can provide limiting structure for a project. The same holds true for the years of World War II or a similar period.

A project might also focus on the time during which the family lived in a particular town, or during which it lived in a certain house. It could concentrate on a person's grade school years only, or the collector could choose some other self-limiting context. Collection of anecdotes featuring an occupation might focus on farming, lumbering, teaching in a one-room school, keeping house before electricity, working on a factory line, participating in the difficult unionization of a factory or industry, or any other occupation of a family member. Emphasis should be on methods of work accomplishment or achievement, implements, and work-centered anecdotes.

Food is also a popular topic. Everyone, it seems, has a spaghetti story: the bride cooks far too much, or forgets to prepare a sauce to go with it, or has some other disaster that becomes a part of the family's traditional lore. Let someone in the family experience a similar disaster, and the anecdote will be re-created in a way that unites the present cook's culinary failure with approved family lore.

Food stories also center around treasured family recipes, especially when some narrative enhances them. The Depression Cake created by grandmother when ingredients were scarce, or a secret ingredient chess pie recipe obtained from — it is said — Richard Nixon's Quaker grandmother and passed down in the family, or the crescent rolls baked and sold daily by a family member to finance her college education all become special not only for their taste, but also because of their special meaning.

Family holidays or special occasion celebrations also unite a family and make it unique. Most people celebrate birthdays, especially when they are children, but from family to family these celebrations may vary tremendously. Students may wish to explore their own experiences with birthday, name day, or adoption day celebrations, and then share and compare their family traditions. Other special occasions on which family tradition is superimposed on larger tradition are holidays such as Christmas, Hanukkah, Thanksgiving, and Independence Day. Those who celebrate Christmas could focus solely on the creation of the Christmas tree, beginning with who is primarily responsible for obtaining it, when and where it is erected, what traditional order prevails in the selection and placement of ornaments, and for whom this major decorative structure is created.

Many families hold annual reunions, creating a larger organization which unites them in their own traditions while simultaneously parallelling the experiences of others similarly involved. How the family has established its reunion, the organizational structure involved, where and when it is held, and who comes are all aspects to explore. Who are the organizers? What foods are traditionally brought? Are certain special foods expected? Is there a family-imposed division of food responsibilities? Is there an order of events for the day? Are church services, talent performances, annual review, baseball games or other sports a traditional part of the celebration? If activities once were a part of the occasion but are no longer, why have they been discontinued? What memories do older family members have of those activities? Each family will respond differently to these questions; moreover, different generations within families may view their own reunion traditions differently.

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[1] *A Celebration of American Family Folklore* by Steven J. Zeitlin, *et al.*, has amusing family anecdotes in illustration of this type of project and contains a helpful list of questions for beginning researchers. See Key Works at the end of the essay for a complete citation.

History and Material Culture Studies

Another area or genre of folklore that lends itself to student projects for history and social studies classes is material culture. In recent years, a great interest in things created by people out of their folk traditions has arisen. This interest is witnessed by an enthusiasm for learning old techniques for hand-crafting all sorts of items, from tools to buildings to domestic items such as quilts. Basically the era from which these skills come most recently is Indiana's "pioneer" period, from 1800 to approximately 1880, before the rise of market towns and industrialized urban areas.

During this time in Indiana history, communities were associative units rather than physically recognizable towns. Such folk communities were composed of groups of farms where people having kinship or other ties lived in relative proximity to one another. The "town" was usually the location of mills for grist, flour, or lumber, and one might also find there a general store, blacksmith, church, tannery, a few homes, and possibly some sort of public building or tavern-inn. The rest of the inhabitants were farmers who used the community center as an economic and social base, selling surplus produce through retail channels, or trading off products such as eggs, butter, or baskets for staples not produced on the farm.

Because of the relative isolation of the frontier, and the unavailability of manufactured goods and hard money with which to buy such goods when they were available, Indiana's early settlers produced most of their necessities themselves. The production of these household and farm items, as well as the techniques of producing such things as meat for the table, maple sugar, or flax fiber for linens, holds a fascination for us today. These products and the skills and traditions that underlie them are part of material folk culture. Because the things that are produced in these traditions are frequently tangible and durable, examples made long ago still survive.

There are still craftspeople today who have learned the techniques of these traditions from the teaching of someone within their own folk communities, and these people may be available to teach or demonstrate to others.

A few words of caution should be heeded. Folk craftspeople practicing today should be recognized as the modern-day inheritors of the skills of the pioneers, but they should not be confused with pioneers. Care should be taken to note the changes that have occurred over the years in the production of folk crafts. In other words, a quilter today may use polyesters instead of 100 per cent cotton materials; a furniture maker has probably abandoned the foot-pedal lathe of his grandfather and replaced it with an electrical one.

Furthermore, it should not be assumed that the "pioneers" — a group often equated with the Scots-Irish settlers who emigrated from New England and the Upland South to Indiana — were the only folk group to produce material folk culture of interest. Other early settlers (such as the French and the Germans) and later immigrants of all nationalities and races possessed material folk culture with long traditions worthy of study. When engaging in this study, we must remain sensitive to ethnic and regional variation in form, pattern, and use. The needlework of the Italian immigrants who arrived during the early 1900s in west-central Indiana, and that of recent Laotian immigrants who arrived less than ten years ago are as valuable to folklore study as an Indiana sampler dated 1829.

In general, the use of material folk culture in the study of history and social studies can help remove some of the romantic and mystical ideas that students may hold hold about life in the past. The study of log construction is an excellent example of this use of folklore to understand better historical circumstances and to appreciate change within tradition.

The man who built a home out of logs did not do so alone, but in concert with his neighbors and friends. Using a variety of tools (see illustrations) they felled trees, cut them into appropriate lengths, and hewed them flat on all four sides. The logs were skillfully notched on the ends to fit into each other, squaring the corners and distributing the load-bearing so that the walls supported each other. All this was laid up on a carefully prepared stone foundation, since logs laid on the ground in Indiana would quickly rot or become infested with insects. Many log houses were made of yellow poplar, a wood that is extremely resistent to insects and moisture.

Logs would average 24 feet in length, the length of one side of the dwelling. Because the trees were huge, the average hewed side on a log was 12 inches or more. Today sawmills estimate that native green lumber weighs between 3 and 5 pounds per

Folk Structures in Indiana

Students may wish to see some examples of reconstructed or reproduction log structures. If there are no examples in your community, perhaps you might make a field trip to one of the following places:

- Spring Mill State Park, Mitchell
- Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, Lincoln City
- Whitewater Canal State Memorial at Metamora
- Rockport Memorial Park
- Mathers Museum, Indiana University, Bloomington
- Treatyline Pioneer Village, Dunlapsville
- Historic Fort Wayne
- Conner Prairie Pioneer Settlement, Noblesville
- Fort Ouiatenon, Lafayette
- Cass County Historical Society and/or France Park, Logansport

Other folk buildings of interest may be seen at New Harmony and at Vincennes (the recently restored Brouillet House of French construction).

are carried out in the barn, but also the place of the barn in the whole farm economy — the importance of the barn to the farmer.[2]

Farm layouts as a whole need more study in Indiana. Farm layouts include the location of the barn and house and other outbuildings in relation to roads, pastures, crop fields, and other physical features of the farm (see illustrations). For students in rural areas, this study could be an interesting appendage to a family folklore project. Attention should be paid to the changes that have occurred on the farm over the years. Is a former summer kitchen now a pony or storage shed? What additions have been made on the house and barn over the years? What changes in the family prompted these additions?

Only through a thorough study of a traditional house or barn can we truly appreciate the skill and expertise of the early craftsmen. Care should be taken to attempt to interview the people who are familiar with these structures. In this way we may develop the best possible understanding of how the structures are used and how the people feel about them.

Community History Projects

The use of community folklore resources in the study of history and social studies may go beyond the study of crafts and architecture to examine other forms readily available but sometimes overlooked as sources of information.

For instance, scarecrows and other anthropomorphic folk figures, beloved since the writing of *The Wizard of Oz* by Frank Baum, may be studied on the landscape. We might speculate about why such figures are always made in human shape. If the intention is to scare birds and animals from gardens, any moving, reflective object should do. Or will it? Contrast and compare the answers given by gardeners to those given by children who build figures in snow; why do snowmen look like people, and how are they usually decorated? True folk tradition must be distinguished from that which has been affected by "Frosty the Snowman." A third comparison might be made to figures constructed by people at Halloween, using old clothing, pumpkins, sheets, witch hats, and so on. The historical aspects of these folk figures as well as their place in the present may be investigated.

Dowsing — the ability to discover sources of underground water or places where water runs underground — is another ancient art with modern analogs, worthy of study. Dowsing, also called water witching, can be done with any water-influenced forked branch (fruit trees, beech, willow). The forked branch is Y-shaped, and is held with the ends of the short arms loosely in the fists, palm side up. Other dowsing rods may be made from wire coat hangers. In this case two rods are needed; each is cut from the hanger in the shape of an L, using the base of the hanger's triangle as the long leg. Use two hangers for each set of rods. The two rods are held loosely in the fists with the thumbs up, short leg in the hand and long leg pointing forward and parallel to the ground and to the other rod.

In each case the dowser moves smoothly and slowly over the ground, working back and forth until the water source is found. A tree fork will dip to the ground from the base of the Y shape, causing the hands to rotate inward and turn over. Wire hanger shafts will cross over each other in a X over the water source, and uncross as the source is passed. Some professional dowsers specialize in finding only underground springs or well sites, while others prefer to find sources of moving water, such as underground streams, field tiles, storm drains, or sewer lines. Since the location of these sources of water may not be charted, dowsing has its uses.

Many dowsers still exist in Indiana communities, and may be invited to class to demonstrate and/or be interviewed by students. Since dowsers often locate well sites for people who believe in their abilities, you may be able to locate a dowser in your community by calling the local well-drilling company.

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[2] For more detailed information on barn types, see Henry Glassie, *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968.

Courtesy, Indiana Arts Commission.

Cemetery studies have become increasingly popular among school classes; the outdoor classroom is attractive, grassy, quiet except for an occasional lawnmower, fixed permanently so that it can be revisited at intervals without much change, and close enough for inexpensive field trips. Much attention has been paid to doing rubbings of the carvings and inscriptions on stone markers; other kinds of studies may be done as well. One may, for instance, do an interesting project by comparing the shapes of tombstones with similar shapes elsewhere in the structures on the landscape. A good observer can locate and photograph the same patterns demonstrated by stone marker shapes in roof lines, window shapes, decorative brickwork on public buildings, and McDonald's golden arches, among others. Certain forms and shapes apparently have aesthetic appeal, and may be identified by historical periods; they are repeated throughout architecture, large and small.

Demographic studies may be done on the names in a small cemetery: names can be catalogued, history can be investigated for epidemics or war deaths as indicated by the markers, nationality studies might be undertaken, infant mortality can be tracked, the emotional comfort taken from the presence of sentimental verses or phrases might be noted — and perhaps compared to similar "In Memoriam" verses in the classified section of the newspaper.

In conclusion, there are a great number of folklore-related projects that can be done by history and social studies classes, especially as part of a unit on Indiana history. Students and teachers need not roam far from their home base, or spend an exorbitant amount of time and money on projects. However, the field is so rich that any one of the projects suggested here and in the following exercises could expand over an entire semester or year of study. For suggestions on how to start a full-blown project, and possibly receive state funding for the project, see the essay entitled, "Using Local Resources" in this workbook.

Collecting Folk Architecture

The tools for an architectural fieldwork project should include the usual tape recorder, camera, film, and flash attachment, as well as the following items: a detailed map of the county roads; a 50 foot measuring tape; a cane pole converted into an extension arm for reaching difficult points to measure (especially in a barn); clipboard, paper, pens; a thermos bottle filled with lemonade for 90 heat (if research is done in summer); and a car (if distributional study of structures is being undertaken).

The student folklorist interested in barns or houses that have geographical considerations should limit his/her work to a township or other smaller county division. A person studying geographical distributions of bank barns, for example, should travel at all times with a county road map, marking with a felt pen the roads covered, as it is extremely easy to forget which roads have been covered after driving several hundred miles in a circle.

If doing a distributional study, the student folklorist is wise to mark the barns or houses on the county map and number them according to discovery. On a separate piece of paper note the barn/house number, number of photographs taken, and the number placement on the role of film to keep from getting confused when the developed photographs are received. Either slide film or black and white film is useful, depending upon the ultimate goal of the project.

Key Works

Blair, Don. *Harmonist Construction*. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1964.
The houses in New Harmony, Indiana, are characterized by outstanding construction techniques, such as the corbeled chimney and Dutch biscuits.

Cord, Xenia E., and Susanne S. Ridlen, eds. *Collage*. I, 1981; II, 1982; III, 1983; IV, 1984. Kokomo: Indiana University at Kokomo.
Collage is a collection of college students' fieldwork papers, including varied topics such as family folklore, folk architecture, folk crafts, folk remedies, and legends. Back issues are available from the editors; current issue, from the bookstore. Contact both c/o Indiana University at Kokomo, 2300 South Washington, Kokomo, IN 46902.

Ridlen, Susanne S. "Bank Barns in Cass County, Indiana," *Pioneer America*, IV: 2 (July, 1972), 25-43.
This article focuses on description, distribution, and special features of bank barns.

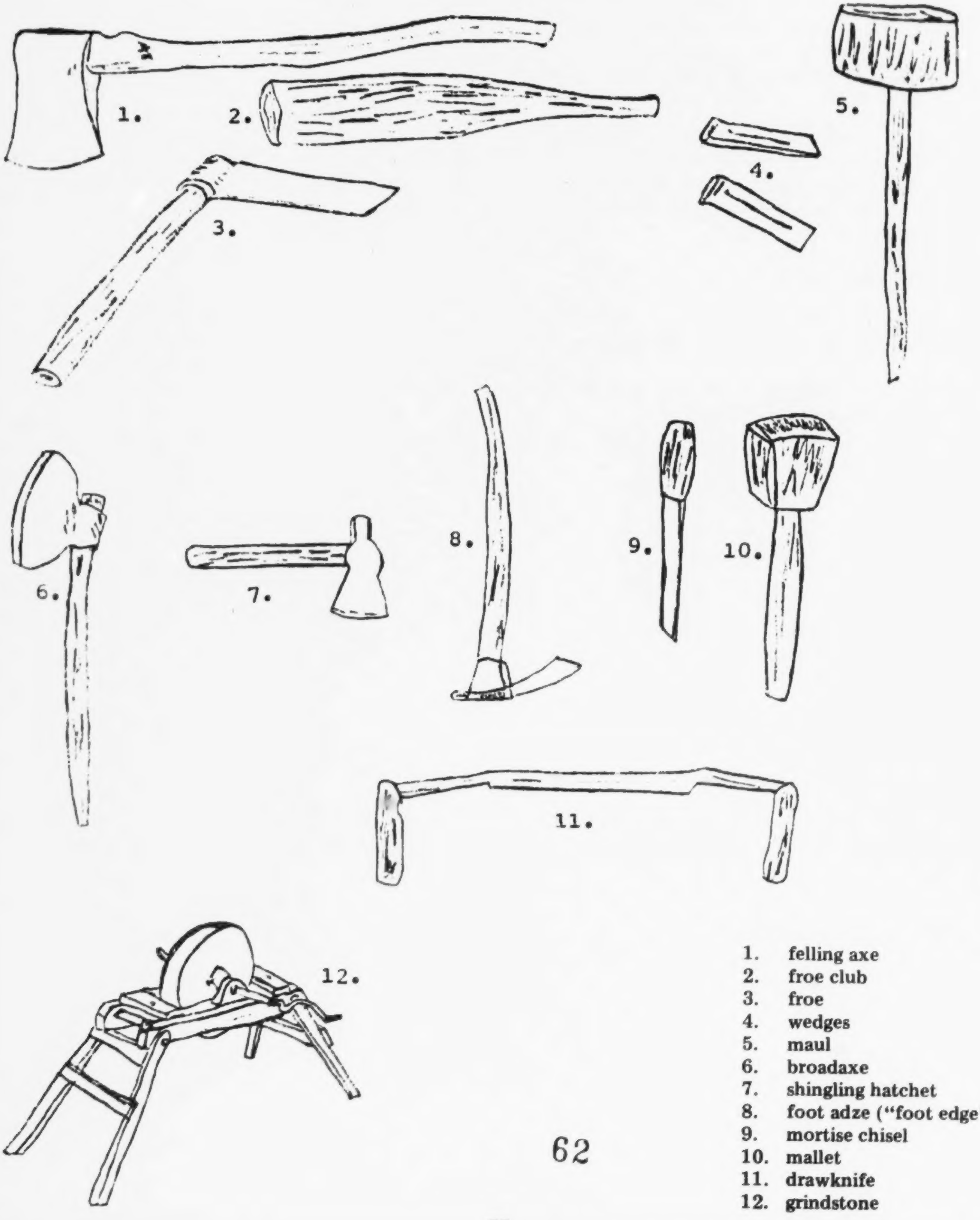
Ridlen, Susanne S. "Preservation of Community History and Tradition: Acquisition, Moving and Reconstruction of Early Log Structures in Cass County, Indiana," *Indiana Folklore*, XIII: 1 and 2 (1980), 64-80.
This article describes in detail how to successfully move a log structure.

Wigginton, Eliot, ed. *The Foxfire Books*. Volumes 1-8. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1975-1984.
This wide-ranging collection of traditional folklore and folklife was transcribed and compiled by high school students interviewing parents, grandparents, and other townspeople in Georgia.

Zeitlin, Steven J., Amy J. Kotkin, and Holly Cutting Baker. *A Celebration of American Family Folklore*. N.Y.: Pantheon Books, 1982.
This collection of stories, traditions, food customs, and photographs provides an invaluable introduction to family folklore.

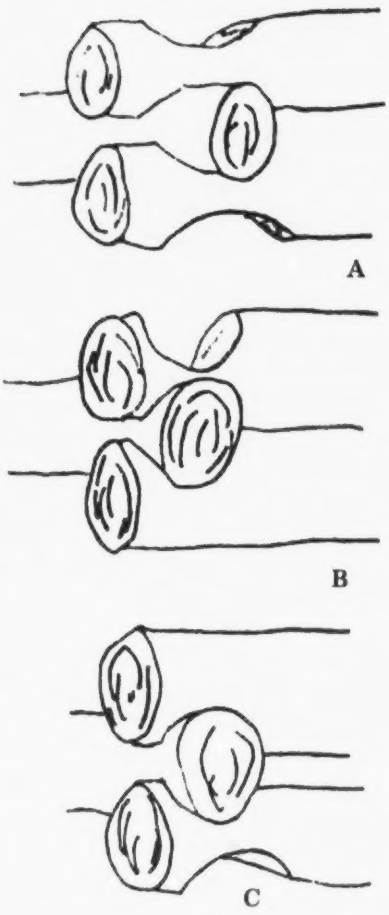
Some Tools Used in Log House Construction

From Warren E. Roberts, "The Tools Used in Building Log Houses in Indiana," *Pioneer America*, IX (1977), 32-61.

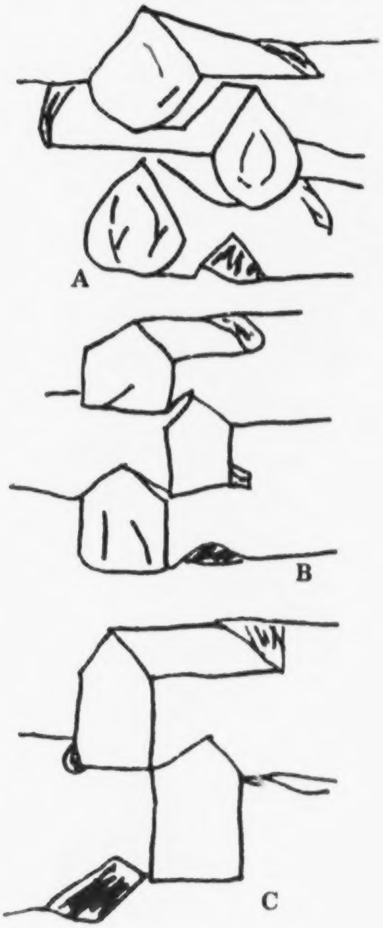


1. felling axe
2. froe club
3. froe
4. wedges
5. maul
6. broadaxe
7. shingling hatchet
8. foot adze ("foot edge")
9. mortise chisel
10. mallet
11. drawknife
12. grindstone

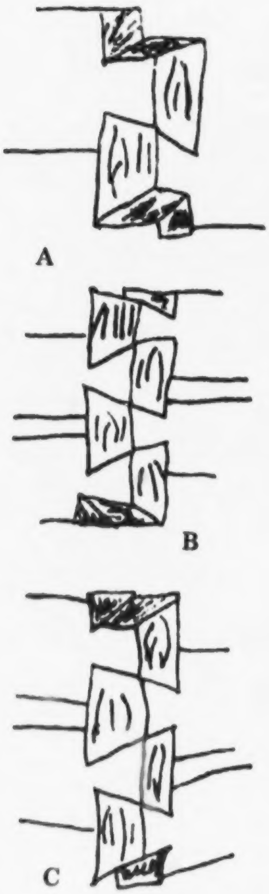
Types of Corner-timbering



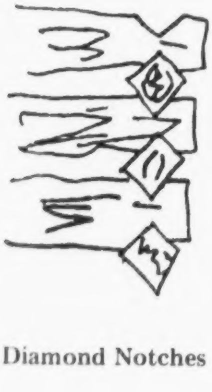
Saddle Notches



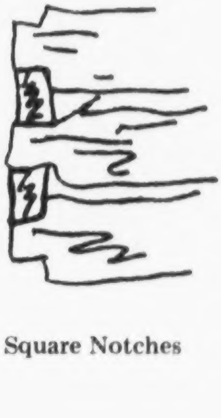
V Notches



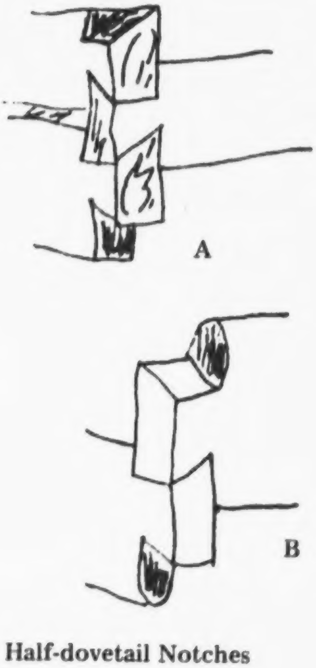
Full-dovetail Notches



Diamond Notches

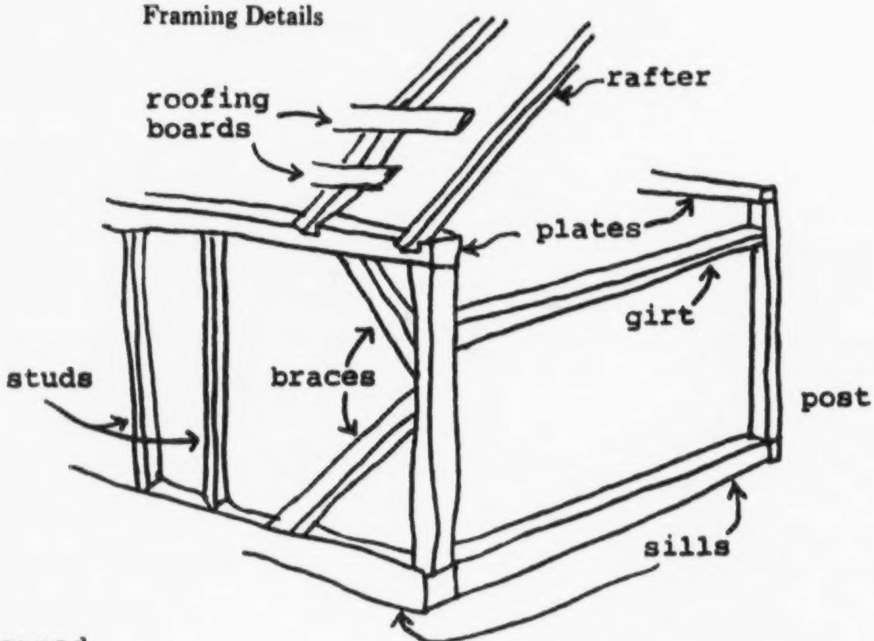


Square Notches

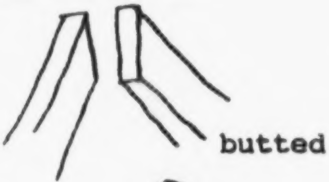


Half-dovetail Notches

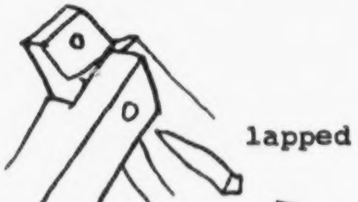
Framing Details


rafter
roofing boards
plates
girt
studs
braces
post
sills

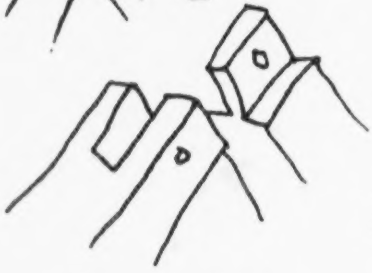
rafter joints:



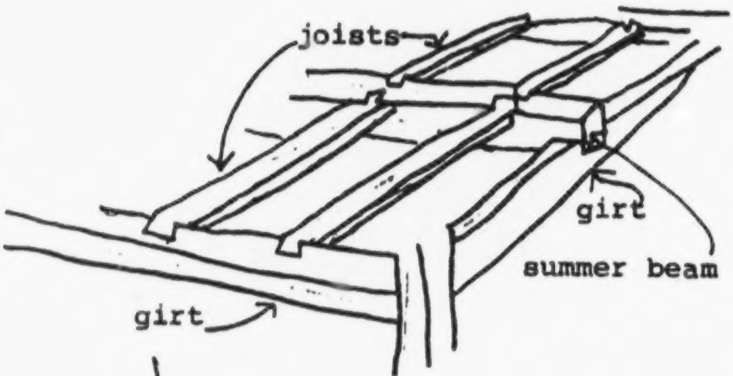
butted

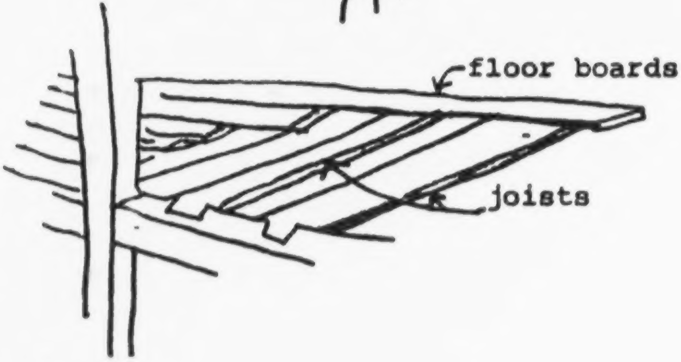


lapped

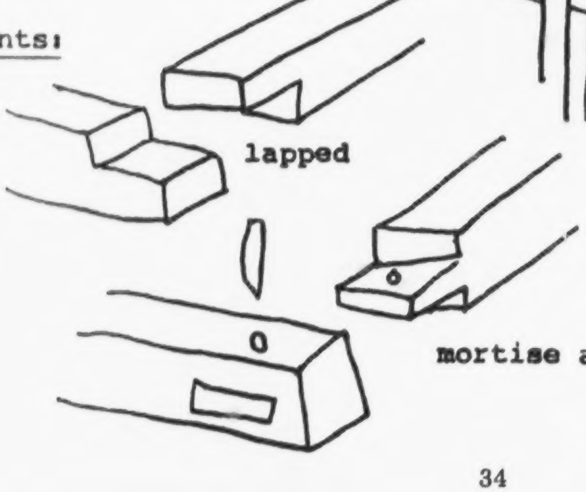


open mortise


joists
girt
summer beam
girt


floor boards
joists

sill joints: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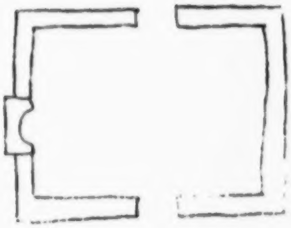
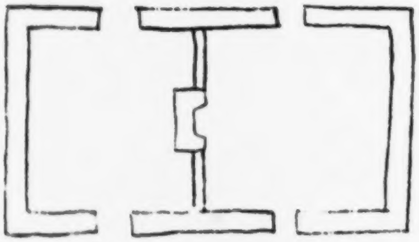
mortise and tenon

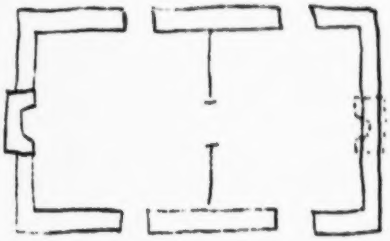
Traditional House Types in Indiana



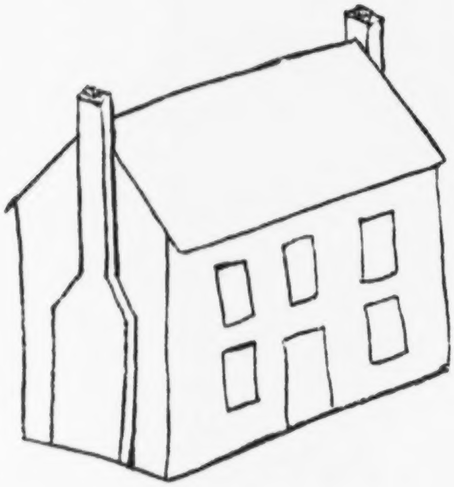
Basic Anglo-American House (1 room)



Saddlebag House



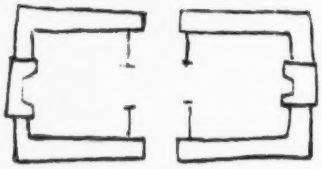
Double-pen House



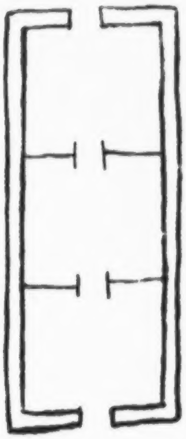
I house (full 2 story house)

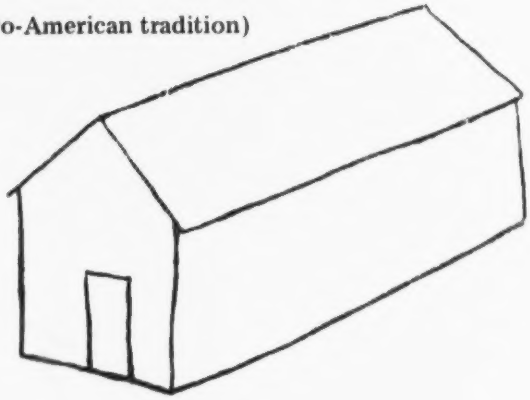
(called "two pens plus passage" or "hall and parlor" when 1½ stories)

I house interior



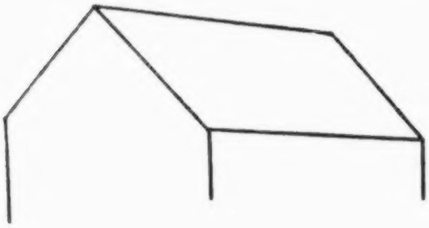
Shotgun house (Afro-American tradition)



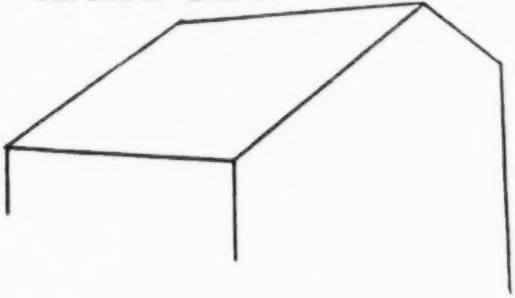


Roof Styles

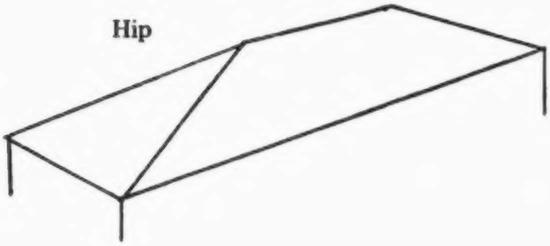
Gable



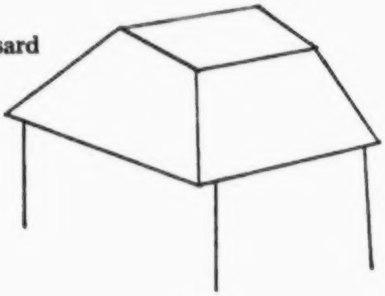
Salt Box or "Lean-To"



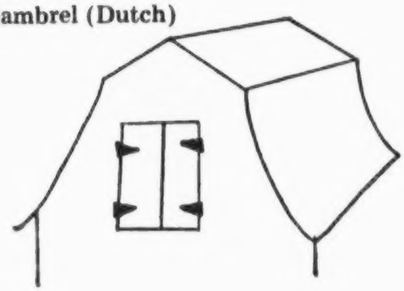
Hip



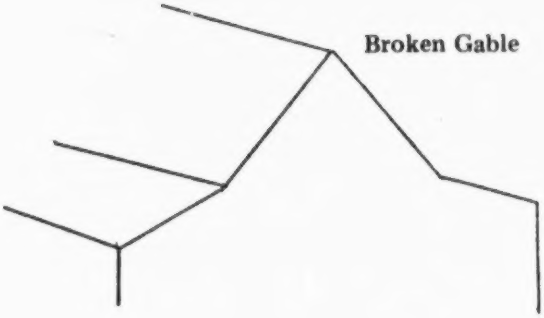
Mansard



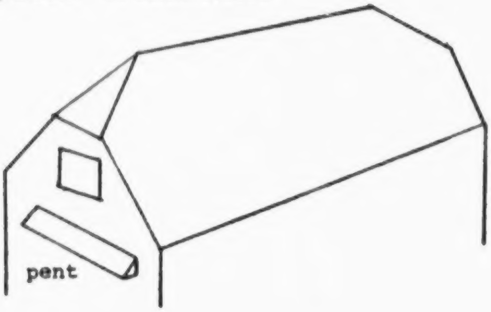
Gambrel (Dutch)



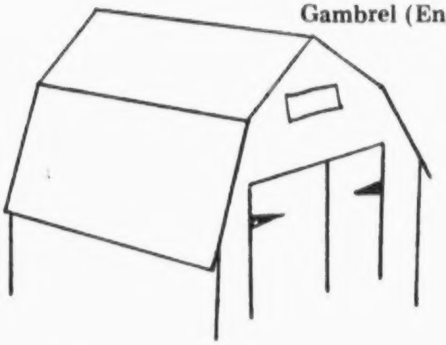
Broken Gable



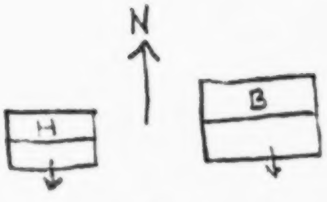
"Snug Dutch" or Snub-Nosed



Gambrel (English)



The Mid-Atlantic Farm Plan



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A. The ideal
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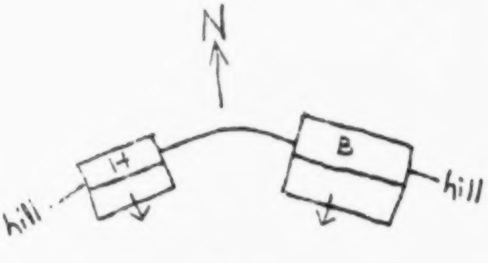
D. Disruption of the ideal by fashion
E. Modification of the ideal by fashion
F. Disruption of the ideal by fashion and physical environment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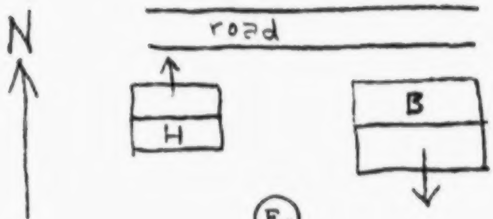

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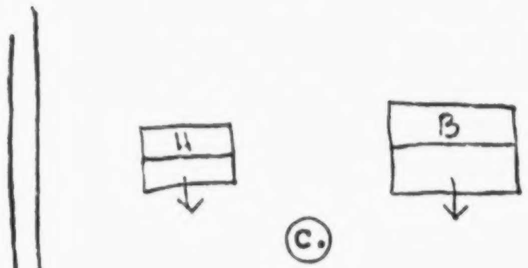

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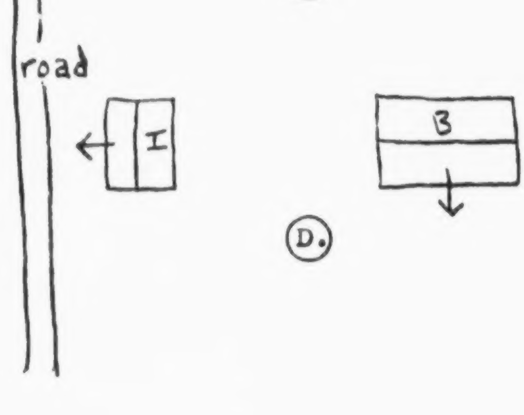

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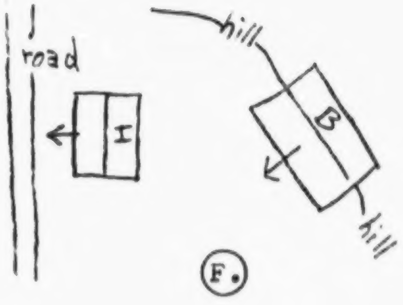
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Family Traditions

Age: A discussion of family traditions, a form of family folklore, can be understood and thoroughly appreciated by every age of student from kindergarten on up.

Objectives:

- awareness of folklore within the family unit
- awareness of differences and similarities between families via their traditions

Instructions:

- A discussion of family folklore traditions should be thorough and allow participation by all students. The discussion could act as a lead-in for a written assignment, then more sharing of traditions at a later date. As the discussion takes place, the teacher should write contributions on the blackboard, or students should print highlights of the discussion on poster board for display.
- The suggested discussion below centers around Christmas traditions. This thorough line of questioning could well be adapted to other events generating tradition among families. If a Christmas tradition discussion is chosen, the teacher should be ready to include any non-Christian students in the discussion in some fashion to avoid embarrassment or alienation.

Discussion Guide:

After explaining to the children that a family tradition is a special practice that a family reenacts in approximately the same way year after year, ask each student to describe his or her own family's way of selecting and decorating a Christmas tree.

- Ask each student if he/she puts up a Christmas tree vs. not putting up a tree at all. What type of tree is selected — artificial or natural? If the tree is natural, what kind — spruce, fir, cedar? (Teacher at this time may want to discuss various kinds of trees, using pictures to show differences and similarities.)
- How is the choice of the tree determined — height, shape, fullness?
- When is the actual selection made? (The selection may occur from the first Sunday in December to the week before Christmas to Christmas Eve.)
- Is the tree cut down personally by the student or family on his/her own property or elsewhere? Or is the tree cut by someone unknown and purchased in a grocery store lot?
- Does the whole family select the tree together or do the parents do the selecting alone?
- When is the tree removed? (Removal of the tree may occur from Christmas Day to the middle of January or later.)

The element of family tradition is very obvious when decisions are made concerning what objects to place on the tree. For example:

- Ask each student what kind of lights are placed on the tree — candles, bubbles, flame lights, all white or blue lights?
- What kind of ornaments are used — handmade or purchased, new or family ornaments?
- Does the family hang fruit, candy, tinsel, garlands, popcorn and cranberries on the tree?
- Is there an angel or star at the top?

If all of the responses are charted on the blackboard, it will be very evident that a great deal of variation exists between families in the tradition of selecting and decorating a Christmas tree.

The discussion of Christmas traditions could be expanded to include many other questions.

- Do you hang a Christmas stocking?
- When is the stocking opened?
- Is Christmas celebrated on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day or another day with grandparents or aunts and uncles?
- Are traditional menus or recipes used?
- Do you attend religious services?
- Are gifts opened before breakfast, dinner, or does the meal occur before the gift ceremony?
- Is the tradition of Santa Claus maintained?

It should become clear to the students that while we all share certain traditions, many of the ways that a family has of celebrating a given holiday are uniquely its own. Some of these variations may be explained on the basis of regional, racial, or ethnic heritage, while others arise because of a particular family's history or the personalities and creativity of individual family members.

Interviewing Family Members

Age: 6th grade and above

Objectives:

- practicing interview techniques
- appreciating one's family and its unique folklore

Equipment:

Students should ideally use a tape recorder for this exercise. See the essay entitled "Finding Folklore" in this workbook for collection techniques.

Instructions:

Steven Zeitlin and staff of the Smithsonian Folklife Program have provided a beginning family folklore questionnaire (see separate sheet here) for students to use when doing these activities. Choose one or two of the questions to work on.

The Smithsonian Folklife staff suggests the ideal is to have parents and grandparents come in to the school to share their food customs, stories, and photographs with the class. Family folklore can make many events of history seem more real to students. A classroom exhibition of photographs, artifacts (quilts, coverlets), and other materials from the children's own families can be used to illustrate a unit such as "the westward movement" or "immigration" — and inviting family members in to school to share their reminiscences of an era can literally bring history to life. The study of family lore is a good way of bridging the gap between home and school.

For additional family folklore suggestions read Steven J. Zeitlin, *et al.*, *A Celebration of American Family Folklore*, especially "How to Collect Your Own Family Folklore," 260-71.

A Beginning
Family Folklore Questionnaire

(From Steven J. Zeitlin, *et al., A Celebration of American Family Folklore*)

1. What do you know about your last name? Its origin? Its meaning? Did it undergo change coming from the Old Country to the United States? Are there stories about the change?

2. What expressions and nicknames are used in your family? How did they get started? Is a particular member of your family especially good at making up expressions?

3. What stories have come down to you about parents? Grandparents? More distant ancestors? How have these relatives described their lives to you? What have you learned from them about their childhood, schooling, jobs, and recreation? Do different relatives tell the same stories in different ways? How do their versions differ?

4. In your family are there any photographs, dishes or other objects that once belonged to your ancestors? If so, what stories are connected with these things?

5. Are there recipes in your family from past generations? If so, where did they come from and how were they passed down? Are they still in use today?

6. Compare the stories and photographs about your present family with the stories and photos of your parents' and grandparents' families. What does the comparison say about how life has changed over the years?

Gravestone Studies

Age: Fieldwork trips to the local cemetery are exciting and informative for any age group.

Objectives:

- participation in a project useful in a number of disciplines
- close observation of an excellent source of cultural information
- learning more about the history of the local area

Instructions:

- **Guide to Gravestone Rubbings**

This project is useful in the study of local history, religious symbolism, epitaphs, art, carving styles, genealogy, and other aspects of social history.

A trip to the cemetery may take two hours or more depending upon the distance traveled and the number of stones each student will rub. A good rubbing may take an hour. The teacher is advised to do a rubbing prior to the field trip, so that the students may see the finished product prior to the cemetery visit. Since the gravestone rubber will be sitting on the ground during the course of preparing and rubbing the stone, jeans and tennis shoes are suggested. Also precautions should be taken against poison ivy.

The materials needed for gravestone rubbing include paper (sheets of rice paper, a roll of unprinted newspaper, or white shelf paper), wax crayons or a black lumber crayon, and masking tape.

The steps for a rubbing are as follows:

1. Select a very smooth stone, e.g., slate, granite, or marble.
2. Carefully clean off any foreign material on the stone.
   BEWARE NOT TO DEFACE THE STONE IN ANY WAY.
3. Tape the paper to the stone.
4. Rub the crayon over the entire surface of the paper.
   DO NOT GET ANY CRAYON ON THE STONE.
5. Remove all the tape from the paper and stone.

The stone rubber now has an attractive piece of art, as well as a piece of local history. Upon returning to the classroom the students can discuss the various designs, shapes, epitaphs, and life spans of the deceased recorded on their gravestone rubbings.

- **Grave Registration Project**

A more involved gravestone project for a junior high or high school class would be to develop an archive of grave registrations for a township or a county. For five years the 8th graders at Union High School in Dugger, Indiana, registered graves in two Sullivan County townships. When the class of 8th graders was graduated, the project was continued with the next class.

A grave registration project involves history, research, archiving and interviewing techniques, English, genealogy and family heritage, art, typing, and community responsibility.

Research should begin by discovering all the cemeteries in the township or county to be studied. Early county maps, county atlases, county highway maps, local histories, and deed records are useful for locating old cemeteries. The teacher or students should check with the local historical society, genealogy club, and local courthouse to determine if the cemeteries in the area to be studied have been registered. This project is extremely valuable in a township or county where no organization or individual has ever registered the cemeteries. With no depository for grave records, genealogists or local historians must visit all the cemeteries until they find their family plots.

Upon determining which cemeteries have not been registered, mark the sites on a map and prepare for the fieldwork project. All participants should be aware of the importance of the project and the care to be taken in the preservation of the stones. The students should copy down everything inscribed on the tombstones on 4 x 6 index cards. Cemetery transcribing requires patience and skill; accuracy and completeness are essential. Upon returning to the classroom the cards are alphabetized, and the information transcribed to sheets of paper. The handwritten pages may be placed in a loose leaf notebook and typed as a typing class exercise. A long range goal of the project would be to publish the findings of the cemetery study. The local historical society or library may be interested in aiding in producing the final product. Copies should be made available to the historical society, the local library, the county clerk, the local genealogical society, and the sextons of the various cemeteries archived. In addition, the Genealogy Division, Indiana State Library, 140 North Senate Avenue, Indianapolis 46204, is anxious to receive any such information.

With many cemeteries slowly being destroyed, accurate records grow in value. Cemetery research is useful not only to the participants, but it also will serve future generations when the tombstones have been worn smooth or been destroyed.

For detailed information on cemetery transcribing, consult the American Association for State and Local History Technical Leaflet *Cemetery Transcribing: Preparations and Procedures* (009).

Another publication which may be useful for classroom gravestone study is "Folk Art as Found in Whitewater Valley Graveyards." This publication (JHS 034) is available for $1.00 from the Indiana Junior Historical Society, Room 409, 140 North Senate Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

The Study of Log Buildings

Age: The following exercise is suggested for 4th graders, but may be carried out by older students as well.

Other projects involving log architecture are suggested in the preceding essay and in the essays "Using Folklore to Teach Mathematics and Science" and "Using Local Resources" — geared toward older students.

Objectives:

- stimulation of critical thought about technology of another era
- creative problem solving, such as the pioneers' needs
- consideration of problems in historic preservation

Instructions:

This classroom project devises a system for moving a log house as part of a community preservation project. While it is preferable that the students actually see a log house, a set of Lincoln Logs might be used for demonstration. This project will still stimulate the students to think critically in planning the moving process.

The questions to be addressed are varied.

- How should the logs be numbered and identified when the house is dismantled in order to reconstruct it on the new site? (The logs are not interchangeable in a log building.)
- What is the best method and equipment to use in dismantling the structure?
- If an average 12" x 12" x 24' log weighs nearly 1,200 pounds, how many people will it take to carry one log when the house is taken apart?
- How will the upper logs of the structure be raised in the reconstruction?
- If the house is moved intact on a flatbed truck, what equipment and permits are needed? In this discussion the students would need to learn the width of a two-lane highway, street, or other roads that the truck would follow. How many stoplights and power lines would have to be raised? Are there railroad tracks to cross?
- Once the structure has been moved, what site preparations are needed before the house can be erected? What type of foundation should be used? What system can be used to put the logs back together in order? (The student must keep in mind that the logs cannot be moved at random, as each weighs over 1,000 pounds.) It should become apparent to the students that a man who built a home out of logs did not do so alone, but rather with the cooperation of his neighbors and friends.

For detailed information on reconstruction of log structures, consult Susanne S. Ridlen, "Preservation of Community History and Tradition" (see complete citation in Key Works).

Another guide is the American Association for State and Local History Technical Leaflet *Log Cabin Restoration: Guidelines for the Historical Society* (074).

7

Folklore in Domestic Life

Objectives

- **Recognizing the difference between historical and cyclical family folklore;**
- **Identifying different genres of folklore in the home setting, i.e., oral, material, and customary;**
- **Exploring the family home itself as a source of folklore; and**
- **Adding folklore materials to the discussion of such subjects as food preparation and preservation and health care.**

Introduction

Home economics and family studies courses can certainly be enriched by folklore materials. In this essay, Dr. Barbara Allen enumerates some of the types of folklore found in the home setting. Some of the comments she makes on family folklore are similar to those of Xenia Cord and Susanne Ridlen in the preceding essay; however, family folklore is of such importance that this expanded view of the subject serves to reinforce the many possible uses of family folklore in the classroom.

Items in the Key Works include several excellent models for projects. The exercises present pertinent project ideas; see also the exercises from the preceding chapter for projects involving family folklore.

Folklore in Domestic Life

Barbara Allen

Domestic life affords an ideal subject for folklore study because folklore flourishes in the home setting. Although the family and the home are social institutions, what takes place within their boundaries is not institutionalized. Because the everyday relationships and activities of family members are not dictated by outside forces or authorities, domestic life affords an arena within which families create and maintain a unique lifestyle through folklore. Studying folklore in a domestic setting gives us the opportunity not only to see close up how folklore works within one particular kind of folk group, but also to compare the folklore and folklife of different families, and to see how family life reflects on a microcosmic level larger social forces and experiences. Because domestic life is such a broad field, it might be best to break it down into two smaller components: (1) the relationships among family members, and (2) the activities that take place in and around the home. The focus of the following discussion will be on the folklore that surrounds each of these aspects of domestic life.

Family Folklore

The family, whether it consists of a married couple, of parents and their children, of stepparents and stepchildren, of unrelated adults living communally, or of any other conceivable configuration, constitutes a natural folk group. Its members interact with each other on an intimate and everyday basis. They share, on an intense and long-term basis, common historical experiences, similar attitudes and values, and a sense of identity with each other. And families persist through time even though the individual members change from one generation to the next. The folkloric forms of expression and behavior that emerge from family life most often serve to articulate the relationships of family members to each other and to create and maintain a sense of shared family identity.

While folklore is often a cohesive aspect of family life, we must also be aware that much family folklore centers around conflict. Thus, sibling rivalry, the occurrence of a "black sheep" in the family, and feuds within families can generate a great deal of folklore. Also, family lore changes dramatically when circumstances such as divorce and remarriage occur. We must remain sensitive to these aspects of family folklore and study them as well.

Folklore that emerges from family life falls into two types. The first type is historical and includes forms of expression and behavior that emphasize vertical family identity, i.e., the relationship of successive generations of family members through time. The second kind of family folklore is cyclical. It comprises folkloric forms that stress horizontal family identity, or the relationships of living members to each other in the present. The term cyclical is used because this kind of family folklore is most often associated with the daily, seasonal, or yearly cycle of family life and with the life cycle of the family itself (i.e., from marriage through the birth, childhood, and adolescence of offspring, through the last child's leaving home).

Historical Family Folklore

Most family folklore that deals with family identity through time seems to be either material or verbal in form. **Material family folklore** includes artifacts of all varieties that serve to remind present members, either physically or visually, of their connections with the past. One major class of such artifacts is heirlooms — items of furniture, jewelry, clothing, or other personal or domestic articles whose value in the present derives from their having belonged to a member of an earlier generation of the family. In our living room, for instance, stands a trunk that belonged to my husband's grandfather, who bought it when he left Kentucky in 1888 to work as a migrant farm laborer in Illinois.

Often families have their own rules governing the transference of such items from one generation to the next. The oldest daughter, for example, may inherit her grandmother's wedding ring or the boy named after his grandfather may be given the grandfather's watch. Such memorabilia may have an intrinsic value (as is the case with jewelry), or they may be valuable only to family members who have special memories of an otherwise ordinary object. For instance, in my own family, my siblings and I already "have dibs on" (i.e., have spoken for) various household items in use when we were children, including a battered aluminum tray, a small, much-painted bookcase, a meat-grinder, and a pair of ceramic chickens — all virtually worthless in the eyes of the world, but precious to us because of our associations with them. Objects like these, that have not yet achieved the status of heirlooms, might be termed simply family souvenirs that link members not to previous generations but to their own earlier selves. Such souvenirs include scrapbooks of all varieties: "baby books," collections of grade school projects (hand-made Halloween masks and Mother's Day cards), graduation and wedding announcements, postcards received from traveling relatives and friends, and a host of related items.

Probably the predominant kind of material historical family folklore is the **photographic image**. Photographs constitute a family's visual archives of its history. They can take a number of forms, from home movies to black-and-white or color prints to color slides. Because of their prominence in American family life, photographs offer an exceptionally valuable key to family life and history. For instance, the organization of a family's photograph collection can indicate what a family considers to be its origins, as reflected in the first photograph selected for display in a chronologically-oriented collection. In my own family's collection, the first image on the first page of the first album is of my parents after their engagement. The collection can reveal what the chief periods in a family's life have been, through labels such as "our home on Karen Street" or "during the year in Germany." Photographs can reveal the boundaries of family membership, which may include close friends or even pets. Significant events in family life are also reflected in family photos, including not just holidays, birthdays, weddings, vacations, and other special times, but also occasions like the purchase of a new house, car, or boat. The whole spectrum of subjects in a family photograph collection, in fact, constitutes a family's self-image, preserved and presented publicly.

Courtesy, Indiana Arts Commission.

In addition to the subjects of family photos, the use that families make of their photo collections may reveal the extent to which they maintain a sense of identification with earlier generations (e.g., by examining old photographs to discover family resemblances between members of different generations) or even with themselves in previous years. For instance, a military family of my acquaintance, which moved every two or three years, would set aside an evening together shortly after each move, make popcorn, and view together the entire collection of family slides, with accompanying narration by the father. The function of the ritual clearly was to promote a sense of security and identity among family members who found themselves in strange surroundings.

In addition to artifacts, historical family folklore also exists in **verbal form**, especially in names and in narratives. Just as family heirlooms link past and present family members through the possession of an object, so **names** can be used to effect a similar link between generations. Passing names along to following generations is widely practiced, and each family not only has its own unique names, but may also have its own rules for how those names are to be bestowed. A male first name may be retained through successive first sons or a mother's maiden name may be used as a child's first or middle name. There may be an injunction against naming a child after a living (or a dead) relative. Whatever practices are followed, a family name often confers upon the recipient more than just a moniker; it may also involve the imputation of the physical features or personality traits of one's namesake.

In addition to formal names, families may also bestow nicknames on individual family members. One category of nicknames includes generic terms, like Junior or Sissy, used to distinguish between two living family members with the same name. In certain areas of the south, the same kind of distinction is achieved for married women by attaching the husband's first name to the wife's: e.g., Flora Glenn and Flora Edgar are a mother- and daughter-in-law with the same first name married respectively to men named Glenn and Edgar. Nicknames can also be created out of an event in an individual's life or from a childish mispronunciation of a real name.

The other major verbal form of historical family folklore is narrative. Family stories may deal with a nearly infinite variety of subjects, but folklorists have found that they tend to cluster around certain topics. One such topic cluster deals with origins. Stories in this group include narratives about how an ancestor came to the United States from the Old World, how the family came to settle in a particular region or community, or how grandparents or parents met, courted, and married. A second group of stories clusters around the family's economic and social fortunes. Many families, for example, have tales of how an older family member had the opportunity to make a fortune but through lack of foresight or excessive caution did not buy into a business or invest at the right moment.

Other stories tell of family property being lost, such as land being taken and never restored or jewelry or other valuables being hidden and never found. Families recount stories of brilliant or eccentric ancestors, of pranksters and black sheep. And there are stories that link the family with major historical events, such as the Great Depression or the World Wars. My own father, for instance, recounts that he heard about the bombing of Pearl Harbor while he was visiting a friend who had "a very pretty sister." He tells his children that if he hadn't joined the Army at that point, "you might have had a different mother" — a striking example of the impact of an international-scale event on an individual family's destiny! Families also cherish stories of relatives' encounters with famous persons. Families in Indiana, Kentucky, and Missouri, for instance, tell of parents or grandparents befriending or being befriended by Jesse James.

Family stories, like family photographs, are fundamentally historical in nature. They ground the family firmly in its own past and extend the sense of family identity back in time by linking present family members with those of the past.

Cyclical Family Folklore

The second kind of family folklore emerges from the daily, seasonal, yearly, and life cycles of a family and the life cycles of individuals within that family. Whereas historical family folklore seems to be chiefly material and verbal in form, cyclical family folklore is largely customary in nature.

Family customs associated with the everyday routine of family life include such things as bedtime rituals, weekly outings, or special family meals. An Italian-American student of mine reported that the Wednesday night meal in his family always featured pasta. Seasonal activities that could evolve into family customs might include mushroom-gathering or berry-picking expeditions, cleaning house in the spring, or shopping for school clothes in the fall. On a yearly basis, families may take vacations or celebrate holidays together. Holiday celebrations, in fact, afford the opportunity to observe a wide range of folkloric activities within families, for they may involve a family reunion, preparing special foods, singing, playing games, costuming, decorating the house inside and out, gift-giving, and dramatic presentations.

Families also celebrate other special occasions that, unlike holidays which are widely observed, are meaningful only within the family and, like other forms of cyclical family folklore, serve to highlight family identity in a way that emphasizes the relationship of living members to each other. Family reunions, in other words, are simply celebrations of family identity by people bound together by common ancestry. Other special occasions—such as birthdays and anniversaries, graduations and retirements, christenings and weddings—focus attention on individual family members, but do so in a way that emphasizes the individual's identity within the family. Ultimately what all these forms of cyclical family folklore have in common is that they are a means of creating and reinforcing bonds among family members. They serve both to define and to celebrate family relationships in the present.

It is difficult to completely separate historical from cyclical family folklore because the two types so often occur together and are used in conjunction with each other to make symbolic statements about family relationships and family identity. For instance, a wedding (cyclical) may call for a wedding gift of a family heirloom (historical). Likewise, the custom of decorating the Christmas tree (cyclical) may be accompanied by the taking of photographs and the recounting of stories of previous Christmases (historical).

Through family folklore we can study the impact of historical events and processes on families. For example, the meaning of the Great Depression for a family may be expressed in the presence of a special dish, first concocted out of the exigencies of hard times, on the family Thanksgiving dinner table. In terms of the large social forces at work in American history, the folklore of individual families can document, through family stories and photographs, immigration and migration experiences and all the joys and traumas associated with them. The folklore of several generations of one family might take on the form of a saga that reveals the involvement of individual members of the family in the historical movement of Americans from rural to urban environments and thence to the suburbs.

Domestic Folklife

Folklorists use the term **folklife** to refer to the entire complex of traditional activities, behaviors, and expressions of a folk group. We have already seen that the family constitutes one type of folk group. Thus, family folklore in its various forms constitutes one element in domestic folklife. Let's take a look now at other traditional elements in home life.

We are justified in speaking of domestic folklife because families run their lives autonomously, not under strong, formalizing pressure: much of what people do in the domestic setting is governed not by outside authority but by what the family itself considers right and appropriate. Often our sense of the right way to do things is heavily influenced by tradition, by the example set by previous generations as well as by what we see our neighbors and friends doing. Thus a woman may justify her method of cooking without measuring by saying, "Well, that's the way my mother always did it."

Folklife in a domestic setting comprises an almost limitless array of behaviors and activities revolving around such things as food, clothing, health care, decoration of the home, child-rearing, entertainment, and the management of money.

Food

It shouldn't be surprising that there is probably more folklore associated with food in all its aspects than with any other area of domestic life — food is, after all, essential to life. The term **foodways** refers to all the traditions associated with procuring, preserving, preparing, and presenting food.

Let's begin with procurement. In rural areas and, more recently, in urban and suburban settings, people raise food in vegetable gardens for their own use. Traditions surrounding family foodways often dictate what is grown in the garden. For instance, every year my husband plants a few green beans whose seeds have been in his family for four generations. It may be customary for certain family members to be responsible for the planting and upkeep of the garden and for others to take charge of processing the harvest. Families may adhere to a traditional system of beliefs about planting and harvesting according to the signs of the zodiac ("planting by the signs").

Cultivation is just one means of procuring food. There are also hunting, trapping, and fishing, each with its attendant folk beliefs and practices. There are, as well, gathering activities involving wild foods, such as nuts, berries, and edible plants like mushrooms and greens.

Folklore associated with the procurement of food is not limited to situations in which families grow or gather their own. Shopping for food may also involve traditional practices, such as making a family outing of grocery shopping, doing the shopping on a particular day of the week, or having different family members responsible for buying different items.

Once food is procured, traditional methods may be employed for its preservation. In an age of electric refrigeration and pre-packaging, preservation has become less of a concern for contemporary families (although parents may devise ways of hiding food treats from children and thus "preserving" them at least from immediate consumption). But along with the recently revived interest in gardening has come an increase in the practice of traditional food preservation methods such as canning, pickling, and drying, with freezing being a more recent addition to the list.

Preparing food may involve not just traditional family recipes, but also practices such as mixing dough with one's hands, giving a child the mixing spoon or bowl to lick, or testing the temperature of a frying pan or a griddle by flicking a few drops of water onto it. Tradition may also govern who cooks what, where, and when. It may be customary, for instance, for the man of the house to prepare pancakes for the family on Sunday morning or to serve as outdoor chef on a backyard grill, while children may fix popcorn for the family in the evening.

The presentation of food and its use on particular occasions is a fourth major area of foodways. Often the specialness of an event is marked by the serving of particular foods. Cake and ice cream on a birthday or turkey on Thanksgiving are obvious examples, but special ethnic foods with symbolic significance also serve this purpose. Also marking special occasions along with food may be the appearance of fine table linen, china, silver, and crystal. Finally, custom may also come into play in table protocol, dictating who sits where, who serves what, who is responsible for refilling plates and glasses, and who helps smaller children with their food.

The House Itself

The family's living space, inside and out, is another important area of domestic folklife. How a family uses its interior space is dictated at least as much by community and family tradition as by the influence of popular culture. In some areas, for instance, it may be common to use a front room of the house only for entertaining important guests, while the family itself "lives" in the kitchen or den. It may be traditional for each child to have his or her own bedroom whenever possible, necessitating that children be bunked with others of their age or sex as the family is increasing, but allowing them to be moved into their own rooms as older children move away from home.

There may be separate rooms for guests (spare room), for children's play activities (rumpus room), or other special purposes (sewing, painting), depending on the family income, the interests of family members, and the size of the house. In the case of cramped living quarters, as in many apartments, rooms may serve more than one purpose — e.g., living room by day and bedroom by night. No two families living under similar circumstances will utilize space in the same manner, yet from each situation will emerge a lifestyle that is built on a way of doing things that is traditional within that family.

How the dwelling is furnished and decorated and the extent to which each member of the family has a voice in the overall process, or at least in furnishing and decorating his or her own personal space, may be dictated by tradition. Certain colors may be thought of as appropriate for certain rooms (e.g., blue for bedrooms or pastels for nurseries). Some families may make extensive use of heirlooms, either as everyday furnishings or as special decorative objects, or of family photographs, which may be scattered throughout the house or relegated to a special wall in one room.

The exterior of the house represents the family to the public and also reflects traditional ideals, particularly in the distinction between the front of the dwelling and the back. For instance, the front door may be reserved for formal visitors while family members and close friends use the back door. Formality may prevail in the landscaping of a front yard with well-defined flower beds, carefully trimmed shrubbery, and ornamental items such as birdbaths or statuary. The backyard, on the other hand, may be more casually planted and contain such things as children's play equipment, a woodpile, and a storage shed. Even where a family's exterior space is limited to front and back porches, the same distinction may be observed, with a flower pot and perhaps a chair or two in the front, while trash cans and mops are relegated to the back.

There may be community customs that dictate the presence of chairs or a swing on the front porch. In some cases, such furnishings may be purely ornamental — e.g., a wrought iron settee — while the family may actually spend its outdoor time on the back yard patio, porch, or deck. Because the exterior of the dwelling exists in two worlds — that of the family and that of the local community or neighborhood within which the family lives — the practices associated with this aspect of home life reflect the interplay between community and domestic traditions.

Health Care

Although most twentieth-century Americans make regular use of both institutionalized medical practitioners and facilities and over-the-counter remedies, a good deal of primary health care still takes place within the home. Home medical practices center around those aspects of health and sickness that are most commonly encountered and easily dealt with, such as childhood illnesses, colds and flus, and accidents involving cuts, bruises, stings, bites, and broken bones.

In the past, such home medical practices might have included the preparation and use of materials from the natural environment, such as herbs, or the berries, leaves, or bark of trees or plants. These natural substances were used both internally (e.g., as teas) and externally (e.g., as poultices) for both preventive and curative purposes. For instance, some people carried (and some still do carry) buckeyes in their pockets as a preventive measure against rheumatism, and dock leaves rubbed over bites, stings, or scratches will soothe the irritation on the skin.

In contemporary home remedies, we are more likely to use materials found in the kitchen or purchased over the counter than natural ingredients. For instance, my mother-in-law deals with cuts and other small wounds by covering the afflicted area with table salt, then binding it up with a white cotton rag. My own mother always applied a paste of baking soda and water to bee stings to relieve the pain.

Certain families may have a special home remedy, based on a jealously-guarded family recipe, that is used for almost any ailment. A friend of ours swears by her grandfather's liniment — a powerful-smelling, bright green liquid made up of ingredients easily obtained in a drug store, such as camphor oil and ammonia. The grandfather never purchases all the ingredients in one store at one time, lest his potion be duplicated by someone else, and he has only recently reluctantly agreed to share the secret with his grandson-in-law.

Other family medical practices may involve the recognition of one individual as the family medical practitioner, or all family members may share equally in the traditional family medical lore. There may even be a trace of magical practice in family health care. In the past, for instance, an instrument that accidently inflicted a wound, such as a knife, might be carefully wiped clean and oiled and wrapped in cloth to prevent its rusting, so that the wound itself might heal properly. Perhaps even a parent's kiss on a child's injury "to make it better" can be properly interpreted as a kind of magical medical practice.

Another discussion of folk medicine is found in the essay on "Using Folklore to Teach Mathematics and Science" in this workbook.

There are dozens of other areas of domestic folklife in which traditional ways of doing things govern the relationships between family members and their everyday activities. Although outside forces may impinge upon the family, each family ultimately creates for itself, in its day-to-day life, its own pattern or lifestyle, hence, its own folklife.

Key Works

Family Folklore

Cutting-Baker, Holly, *et al. Family Folklore.* Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1976. (paperback)
A short (approximately 50 pages) general introduction to the major forms of family folklore, plus an interview guide which is also distributed as a separate publication by the U.S. Government Printing Office.

LaPin, Deirdre, *et al. Hogs in the Bottoms: Family Folklore from Arkansas.* Little Rock, Ark.: August House, 1982. (paperback)
Collection of family folklore from seven Arkansas families, showing how each family's traditions function for family members.

Zeitlin, Steven, *et al.*, eds. *A Celebration of American Family Folklore: Tales and Traditions from the Smithsonian Collection.* N.Y: Pantheon, 1982. (paperback)
Collection of family folklore materials from all over the U.S., organized by topic (e.g., stories about eccentrics) as well as by genre (e.g., stories, customs).

Domestic Folklife

Arnold, Eleanor, ed. *Memories of Hoosier Homemakers*: Volume 1, *Feeding Our Families* (1983), Volume 2, *Party Lines, Pumps and Privies* (1984). Indiana Extension Homemakers Association. (paperback)
These books, part of a series resulting from an oral history project of the Association called Hoosier Homemakers Through The Years, are available from local home extension agents. They are excellent compilations of Indiana materials organized by topic: foodways in terms of, for example, gardening and community gatherings, and new technologies in perspective, for example, "Cellars, Iceboxes and Frigidaires" and "Windmills, Delco and REMC." Beautiful use of edited oral history materials in conjunction with photographs.

Burke, Carol, ed. *Plain Talk*. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1983. (paperback)
Compilation of oral history materials gathered in Jasper, Benton, and White counties, Indiana, by high school students. Organized topically (e.g., childhood, work). Far less successful than the Arnold books because there is no continuity between chapters, but could provide teachers with ideas about possible topics for oral history projects.

Sitton, Thad, *et al. Oral History: A Guide for Teachers (and Others).* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983.
Actually concerned more broadly with cultural journalism in the high school classroom (a la *Foxfire*) than with oral history per se; this is a good manual for teachers who want to get students involved in both folklore and oral history projects.

A Community Oral History Project

Age: junior and senior high school

Objective:

- to provide students in social studies or home economics classes with some historical perspective on various aspects of community and family life

Time: half to full semester

Instructions:

Comparing past with present ways of doing things can often be eye-opening, especially when we learn what is best and most useful about each. One way of making such a comparison is by talking to members of older generations. An oral history project involving several or all members of the class could explore such aspects of the past as child-care and child-rearing practices; food preservation and preparation; family and community medical practices; children's games or pastimes; courting practices; or any other topic of the students' own choosing.

Resource: Setting up and carrying out a relatively complicated project such as this is described in careful detail in *Oral History: A Guide for Teachers (and Others).*

A Class Cookbook of Family Recipes

Age: 4th through 9th grades

Objective:

- to create an awareness of the meaning and values of food, aside from nutrition, in our lives

Time: two weeks to one month

Instructions:

- Ask students to bring to class a special family recipe. (It could be special because it's old or it's just a family favorite or it's served on a special occasion.)
- Initial discussion of the recipes could focus on why the recipe is special and what that particular food (or lack of it) means to members of the family.
- Then have each student write a brief (50-100 words) statement about his or her recipe, giving its background or telling a family story associated with it.
- These statements, along with the recipes themselves, could then be compiled into a cookbook for distribution to class members.

8

Using Folklore to Teach Mathematics and Science

Objectives

- Recognizing that many folk beliefs and sayings relating to scientific phenomenon have some basis in fact;
- Using local resources in the study of math and science;
- Understanding how modern science has benefitted from its "folk roots"; and
- Applying folklore to areas of study within math and science to create a special relevance for students.

Introduction

The versatility of folklore is proven in this essay by Harry Gammerdinger, a folklorist who came to the subject by way of an undergraduate degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Anyone skeptical about the uses of folklore in the study of math and science before reading this essay will be surprised at the practicality of its suggestions and the interesting applications contained in the essay.

This essay could prove especially helpful to the elementary teacher who may search for examples of science and math with special meaning to younger children. For the most part, the materials for the studies suggested are available close to home and make fascinating exercises for young minds.

Using Folklore to Teach Mathematics and Science

Harry Gammerdinger

Folklore is made up of traditional wisdom which has accumulated over the ages. Through the laborious process of trial and error this wisdom has been tested by the folk; later, scientists have often found the traditions to contain truth. Take, for example, the well-known rhyme, "Red sky in the morning, sailor take warning, / Red sky at night, sailor's delight." This traditional rhyme actually states a principle of meteorology. The sky is made red by dust particles in the atmosphere which are usually associated with dry air. Since the prevailing winds are from the west, the western sky indicates approaching weather. If the sunset in the west is red, then dry air is on the way, giving "sailor's delight." But the eastern sky at sunrise reveals the weather which has already passed. If the eastern sky is red, then the dry air has already passed and humidity will be on the rise, bringing the possibility of storms.

In another example, folk medicine has been shown to have a scientific basis. The use of digitalis today by physicians owes much to folk medical tradition. In 1775, an English doctor became interested in the herbs used by a traditional curer to treat heart disease. He obtained a sample of her medicinal plants and discovered that foxglove was the active herb. Digitalis, which is contained in foxglove, is used today by more than three million cardiac patients.

Before the development of organized science, people were curious about their environment and how to benefit from it. Farmers and others dependent on the weather found it necessary to observe nature closely and try to learn how to predict changes. When facing illness, our ancestors would try using the herbs available, and over the centuries a traditional pharmaceutical knowledge developed. In other words, science as it exists today developed out of traditional wisdom. Modern science, then, can be seen as the codification of this wisdom, born of trial and error.

Folklore can be very useful in teaching mathematics and science because it relates everyday life to scientific principles. By using examples from folklore the teacher can show that what is being taught does not apply only in the laboratory. The student can draw upon his own experience and handed-down wisdom to see how science applies to his life.

All branches of science have roots in folk tradition, but in some areas the folklore is more abundant because it serves current needs. The branches of science which I feel are best represented by folk tradition are meteorology, medicine, physiology, technology, and mathematics.

Meteorology

Farmers are not the only people who need to predict the weather; other industries also depend on such predictions: for example, shipping, construction, and even the clothing business. Before the creation of the U.S. Weather Bureau and official weather broadcasts, people had to have ways of predicting the weather, either for tomorrow or for next winter. Today, of course, anyone can listen to the radio for a weather forecast, but there are still advantages to knowing weatherlore. In fact, a person who knows weatherlore can sometimes predict the weather more precisely than the "officials," because the Weather Bureau must forecast over a large area for twelve to thirty-six hour periods. An individual can often predict local weather more accurately by using local signs.

There are records of weather lore dating back 6,000 years, and a wide range of phenomena have been consulted to predict the weather. While some methods appear to have no basis in scientific reasoning, many include anticipated weather research. Signs often used to predict weather include the behavior of animals, wind direction, cloud formations, and the color of the sky.

The behavior of animals can be a reliable predictor of the weather, because animals are sensitive to atmospheric changes. Over the years, farmers and others concerned with the weather have noticed how the activities of animals change in anticipation of weather hours before humans notice any change. In fact, it is the lowering air pressure before a storm that causes animals to act in particular ways.

For instance, it has often been observed that robins will nest before a storm, a fact which is repeated in this traditional rhyme:

If the robin sings in the bush,
Then the weather will be coarse;
If the robin sings on the farm,
Then the weather will be warm.

The phenomenon of robins nesting before a storm has even been studied by climatologists and biologists, who have suggested two reasons for this behavior. First, the low pressure which precedes a storm causes the air to be less dense, and therefore it is harder for the robin to fly. Secondly, the robin's frail nest could be destroyed by a storm if the robin is not in it, and the bird must protect its home.

Domestic animals can also sense an approaching storm. Cattle and horses will herd together or gather in sheltered areas before a storm. Cats will wash their fur and dogs act jittery before a storm. Of all barnyard animals, however, the pig is most often cited as the predictor of storms. Pigs prepare for a coming storm by gathering straw and sticks for their beds, hence the proverb used by many farmers to express this wisdom: "Hogs playing with sticks, bound to be bad weather."

Animals are not the only ones which can sense weather changes. Everyone has heard of — and perhaps experienced — aching joints foretelling a storm. This pain is actually caused by the increased humidity and low pressure which precede a storm. One study showed that 72 per cent of arthritic patients experienced increased pain each time the barometer fell. Also those with bad teeth, badly healed bones, stomach disorders, the headache prone, or those suffering from corns and bunions will often have more pain as pressure decreases and humidity increases. Some of these disorders are described in the traditional rhyme: "A coming storm your shooting corns presage, / And aches will throb, your hollow tooth will rage."

Changes in weather also affect the blood's chemistry. High air pressure, associated with good weather, forces more oxygen into the bloodstream. Blood sugar levels are higher when air pressure rises, giving us more energy. Studies in Europe and America show that the number of suicides increases during low pressure periods. The belief that good feelings are brought on by high pressure is expressed in the traditional weather saying, "When everything on the table is eaten, clear weather follows."

While climatologists have found validity in traditional short term forecasts, they remain skeptical about folklore which predicts weather far in the future. There are indeed many traditional beliefs used to predict the coming seasons; especially ways to forecast the severity of winter. This folk wisdom is based on the belief that animals sense how severe the approaching winter will be and consequently prepare for it. Prevalent beliefs are that when the fur on animals is heavy or when birds build nests high off the ground, the winter will be a hard one. There are other sayings, however, which do not have such a clear cut rationale, such as the well-known belief that the width of the black band on the wooly worm foretells the severity of the winter.

Medicine

In recent years, the "back to nature" movement has caused a resurgence of interest in folk medicine. Books have been published which tell how to prepare natural medicines, and stores have opened that sell herbs, and advise on their use. Throughout history, people have treated illness with the herbs available to them. Many drugs used today were discovered by isolating the active ingredient of a traditional cure. Willow bark, commonly used in traditional treatments, was recently found to contain a compound related to acetylsalicylic acid, the active ingredient of aspirin. Recent research also shows that ginseng can increase the body's resistence to stress. Aloe vera, which has been used traditionally for the treatment of burns and rashes, is now found in commercially produced lotions; some physicians prescribe it for nuclear and other radiation burns. More than 40 per cent of all prescription drugs sold today, in fact, are made up, at least partially, of natural products.

Pharmaceutical companies and health organizations spend enormous amounts of time and money researching traditional medicine in hopes of finding new drugs. There is a specific field of study, pharmacognology, which is devoted to deriving new drugs from natural sources. Some of the findings of this study have been in the forefront of cancer research.

In the 1950s, alkaloids were found in the Madagascar periwinkle that are effective in treating two forms of cancer, Hodgkin's disease, and leukemia. Researchers were led to study the periwinkle because of its use in traditional medicine; as far back as the Roman Empire, folk healers were making salves and teas from it. The Mandinko of West Africa use a poultice made of Datura metel to treat breast cancer. Recent investigation of traditional treatments for cancer have turned up a number of plants having tumor-resistent qualities, some of them closely related to Datura metel. Inspired by such discoveries, the National Cancer Institute began a systematic effort to obtain a worldwide variety of plants. Perhaps in the near future additional useful drugs will be developed by western science, guided by folk medicine.

Physiology

Some traditional practices are interesting to study in terms of physiology. An example of such a tradition is dowsing or water witching. The tradition of finding water underground by means of a forked stick developed in Europe no later than the 15th century and was brought to America by settlers in the 17th century. In Europe, many items are used for dowsing, but in the United States some form of forked stick is usually employed, and many dowsers prefer a particular type of wood. Peach is most popular, but other common woods are willow, apple, elm, and persimmon. Some American dowsers also use metal instruments, such as wire, welding rods, iron bars, crowbars, coat hangers, steel files, and pairs of pliers.

A survey of county agricultural extension agents throughout the United States proved that dowsing is a very active tradition. Based on the sample of responses, the researchers estimated that there are at least 40,000 practicing dowsers in this country. Someone who is going to have a well drilled often invites a dowser to come out first. Typically the dowser will use a forked stick, holding one end of the fork in each hand. Then, he will slowly walk over the land looking for water. When the dowser crosses over water, the stick points down, sometimes with such force that the bark is peeled off in his hands. Some dowsers estimate the amount and depth of the water by the strength of the pull.

Don Abrams, Merom, Sullivan County, demonstrates his talent at water witching. Courtesy, Indiana Arts Commission.

There is a great deal of controversy over whether dowsing works. Almost all dowsers are very sincere about their ability, although mystified by it. In many documented cases, dowsers have indicated places where wells were drilled and water found. But in controlled laboratory experiments, dowsers have not been able to perform successfully. Most physiologists who have studied dowsing feel that it is an example of ideomotor action. During an ideomotor action, the individual will perform motor actions without being aware of causing them.

Another example of ideomotor action is the action of a Ouija board. The participants of a Ouija board session will push the pointer about the board, but they are not conscious of moving it; the participants feel that the pointer is moving of its own accord. Similarly, physiologists feel that the dowser unconsciously causes the forked stick to point down by twisting the ends in his hands. They maintain that successful dowsers develop an intuitive sense of where water is likely to be found, comparable to the ability of hydrologists.

In any case, dowsing is an interesting example of a traditional behavior which has developed in response to uncertainty. Drilling a well is an expensive and time consuming job. Dowsing is most common in areas where water cannot be found everywhere, and even a hydrologist cannot be sure where to sink a successful well. In such circumstances, an elaborate behavior has evolved that eases the stress of choosing a well site. The science teacher can use such an example to show how tradition has responded to environmental needs, producing a physiological behavior.

Technology

With the discovery of fire making, agriculture, and the wheel, man began developing technologies that gave him greater power. In 19th century Indiana, technology suited to the environment and cultural conditions developed. Since railroads were scarce and roads poor, overland transportation was slow and expensive. For this reason most goods had to be produced locally by craftsmen. Every small community had its blacksmith, wheelwright, carpenter, wainwright (wagon maker), basket maker, potter, and chair maker. These craftsmen produced the goods needed by their neighbors, using available raw materials and techniques which an individual could master. Because of the close personal contact between the craftsman and the customer, the craft items could be made to suit individual needs.

Students can study these crafts as examples of appropriate technology, i.e., technology suited to the local conditions. Because of industrialization and improved transportation, these crafts have undergone major adjustments to new conditions. Some crafts have disappeared altogether; some now concentrate on repair; some have become hobby crafts; and others have remained relatively unchanged. The ways that traditional crafts have adapted to the modern environment illustrates the evolution of appropriate technology.

Besides these specialized crafts, there were many crafts practiced by the larger population. Probably the two most important were agriculture and food preparation and preservation. In early to mid-19th century Indiana most people lived on small, family farms, the technology of which was suited to the local economy. A tremendous amount of knowledge was needed to master the wide range of activities on these selfsufficient farms. The farmer produced most of the food his family needed and enough surplus to buy or barter for the goods he could not produce. The amount of land put under cultivation was limited by the machinery and labor available. A variety of crops and livestock was raised to serve as many needs as possible.

Northern climates necessitate a means of food preservation to assure that there will be food available during the winter. Before refrigeration, several technologies were developed to solve this problem, each suited to different foods. These included drying, salting, pickling, smoking, conserving with sugar, and storing foods in a root cellar. Students could study these various methods and analyze how they keep the food from spoiling.

While most traditional craftsmen have modified their crafts to accommodate modernization, there are many examples of traditional architecture which have remained fairly unchanged since the time of their construction. Examples of traditional architecture are houses, barns, and sheds which were built along traditional plans using traditional building materials, tools, and construction techniques.

Traditional architecture is an excellent example of appropriate technology because it is extremely functional. Local building materials are used and assembled with available construction techniques to build a structure suited for the local environment. An example of such architecture in Indiana is the log house and barn. Log structures were built because there were plenty of logs available when the settlers were clearing the land. Also, a log building was easier to construct than a frame one, requiring fewer specialized tools, and fewer nails — all considerations on the relatively isolated frontier. In addition, log houses are sturdy and well-insulated.

The materials used in traditional architecture are determined by local supply, whether it be wood, brick, or stone. The design of houses is guided by the local climate. Do the houses have to be warm in severe winters or cool during long hot summers? By closely examining traditional architecture one can appreciate how the builders, guided by traditional knowledge, solved the need for shelter while working within local constraints, utilizing appropriate technology.

Mathematics

Everybody uses mathematics to solve problems outside the classroom. Folk mathematics can be described as the intuitive way people handle the math-related problems which arise in everyday life. Folk math differs from academic math in how and why it is done, relying much more upon mental arithmetic than pencil and paper calculations.

An example of a folk math calculation is the train of thought of a building contractor, overheard by author Eugene Maier as he computed 85 per cent of 26. "Ten percent of 26 is 2.6, and half of that is 1.3," he said. "So that's 3.9 and 3.9 from 26 is - let's see, 4 from 26 is 22 - 22.1 is 85 percent of 26." While this method is based on the same principles as the conventional way of calculating per cents, it relies on an intuitive sense of mathematical methods to do the calculation mentally.

In the 19th century and the early 20th century, mental arithmetic was stressed in the schools. Math textbooks had long series of questions which were intended to be posed orally, and the student responded by doing the math in his head. The belief was that being able to do math mentally signalled the student's competence in mathematics.

There is a tradition of puzzles passed on orally which test one's ability to think logically and mathematically. A very common example is the riddle, "If an egg and a half cost a cent and a half, how much will twelve eggs cost? - Twelve cents."

Such riddles are passed on orally and also found in old school books, their origin usually unknown. Folklorist Inta Carpenter collected this riddle from her Latvian grandfather:

> A flock of geese are swimming in a pond. One goose flies over and greets them, "Hello, one hundred geese!"
>
> They correct him saying, "We're not 100, but to make 100, we need twice as many as we are, half as much, one-fourth as much, and you, too. Then there will be 100."
>
> How many geese are in the pond?
>
> Solution: There are 36 in the pond. Now, start figuring it out. Twice their number, 36 and 36 is 72 and 18 (half their number) is 90 and then the quarter is 9, and that's 99. Add one more and you've got 100.
>
> Interviewer: How can you remember that?
>
> Informant: My father knew it. He gave me that one to figure out.

The informant learned the solution to this puzzle either by memorizing the answer or by calculating it using mental arithmetic. The conventional algebraic approach would be to solve the equation

$$2X + \tfrac{1}{2}X + \tfrac{1}{4}X + 1 = 100$$

where X is the number of geese on the pond.

The value of folk math is that it teaches people how to use math in everyday situations. The percentage problem showed the skillful use of mental algorithms to solve a problem that otherwise would require paper and pencil. Another aspect of mental math is the skillful use of approximation. In many everyday problems, the exact answer is not needed or cannot even be calculated. An example of such a situation is buying groceries with a limited amount of money. In order to buy what you want without running out of money, you need to be able to estimate the sum price of the groceries. This is done mentally by making a reasonable approximation of the sum by rounding the individual prices. Workers in some occupations such as carpentry and construction must constantly make such ball park estimates, but everyone does the same in their lives.

Folk math can be seen as the skillful application of the mathematical principles learned in school to real life problems. This intuitive use of math utilizes a sense of what questions to ask, how to do math mentally, and how to make reasonable approximations. To teach this skill the teacher should try to present the students with problems that require these skills. In the exercises at the end of this chapter, several examples are presented and described.

The examples in this chapter suggest ways that teachers can tap the reservoir of traditional knowledge to teach science and math. The key to doing this is to realize that much traditional wisdom is based upon generations of observation and trial and error. While there is more to folklore than just scientific truths, it is also a mistake to overlook the rationality of folklore. Folklore often deals with those areas on the fringes of science, such as E.S.P., U.F.O.'s, and Bigfoot. In the past folklore has led to new scientific understandings, and this will no doubt continue in the future. By incorporating folklore into the curriculum, the teacher can show how science applies to our everyday lives.

Meteorology

Lee, Albert. *Weather Wisdom.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976.

In this book the author presents traditional weather beliefs and explains how they work. He believes in the validity of many short term predictors but not in long-term predictors (how severe the coming winter will be, for instance). There are separate chapters on using animals and plants, the sky, clouds, wind, and night signs to predict the weather.

Davis, Hubert. *A January Fog Will Freeze a Hog: And Other Weather Folklore.* N. Y.: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1977.

On each page of this book there is a traditional weather proverb and an illustration for it. In the back of the book the author explains why the proverb works. This book is well-suited for elementary students.

Medicine

Aikman. Lonnelle. *Nature's Healing Arts: From Folk Medicine to Modern Drugs.* Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1977.

This book traces the development of modern medicine from traditional treatments. The author explains how recent medical discoveries have verified the efficacy of traditional medicine and how pharmaceutical companies are researching traditional herbs, hoping to find new medicines. The current use of traditional medicine is examined, both in the United States and overseas.

Bailey, D. "Plants and Medicinal Chemistry," *Education in Chemistry*, 14:4 (July, 1977), 114-16.

This article shows how plants that have been used in folk medicine for many centuries are guiding scientists in the design and preparation of new and potent drugs.

Rost, Thomas L., and Maureen L. Sandler. "The Common History and Popular Uses of Roots," *American Biology Teacher,* 40:6 (September, 1978), 338-41.

This article describes the historical uses of popular plant roots such as mandrake, ginseng, chicory, belladonna, and blood root. Besides the text, information is organized into a table presenting use, application, and constituents.

Physiology

Vogt, Evon Z., and Ray Hyman. *Water Witching, U.S.A.* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1959, 1979.

This book briefly presents the history of water witching and its practice in the United States, based upon observation and an extensive survey of county extension agents. The authors review the claims made by dowsers and the tests which have been performed. They argue for a physiological explanation, and present examples of similar phenomena.

Technology

Roberts, Warren E. "Folk Crafts," in Richard M. Dorson, ed., *Folklore and Folklife.* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1972, 233-52.

In this article the author explains what folk crafts are and their role in traditional communities. He briefly describes the traditional crafts of America, organized by the material used. The effect of modernization is also described.

Roberts, Warren E. "Folk Architecture," in Richard M. Dorson, ed., *Folklore and Folklife*, 281-93.

In this article the author explains what folk architecture is and how it differs from elite and popular architecture. He then describes the development of folk architecture study in Europe and the lack of research to date in America. He describes American folk architecture, concentrating on houses and picking out for special comment frame house types in the northeastern United States and log houses in the Midwest.

Mathematics

Maier, Eugene. "Folk Math," *Instructor*, 86:6 (February, 1977), 84-92.

The author defines folk math as the kind of math that people do in everyday situations. He argues for the need to teach folk math techniques in the schools. Folk math is characterized by solving problems where the data is not clearly defined, using approximations, and using mental arithmetic.

Weather Lore

Age: 4th to 7th grade

Objectives:

- **to learn traditional weather beliefs**
- **to attempt a systematic testing of them**
- **to evaluate their validity**

Material needed: A bulletin board or similar means to display the weather predictions would be useful.

Instructions:

- Have students collect some traditional weather predictors from their family or other people they know. This exercise can be done either with short-term predictors (what the weather will be like tomorrow) or long-term predictors (how severe will the coming winter be).
- Students should then collect a number of weather beliefs and display them on a bulletin board.
- Using this list students should then make predictions of the coming weather.
- Students should evaluate these weather beliefs by keeping a record of how successfully each belief's predictions matched the actual weather.

For short-term predictors this exercise could be done over the course of several weeks, but for the long-term predictors it would take at least one season.

For more information on weather lore see: Albert Lee, *Weather Wisdom.*

Planting by the Signs

Age: 8th grade and up

Objectives:

- **to learn about beliefs about planting by the signs**
- **to perform experiments to test these beliefs**
- **to evaluate these beliefs**

Limitations:

In order to test beliefs, students would have to be able to plant some seeds and record their growth, either at school or at home. In addition, the experiment would have to extend over the growing season of the particular plants.

Instructions:

Many people plant by the signs. They do this by planting at a particular time determined either by the phase of the moon or the position of the moon in the zodiac. Some people determine the date themselves while others consult an almanac which gives the signs. Often in a community someone will be recognized as an expert in determining when to plant and consulted by his or her neighbors.

- By interviewing local people, the students can find out when the "proper" time to plant several crops may be.
- They could then plant half the seeds on the recommended date and the other half at a time not recommended.
- By recording how well the plants produce, the students could then evaluate the validity of these beliefs.

There are several almanacs which explain how to plant by the signs. The *Old Farmers Almanac* may be the most popular and available. Others include *McDonald's Farmer's Almanac* and *Ladies Almanac*.

Medical Beliefs

Age: 6th grade and above

Objectives:

- to learn some traditional medical beliefs
- to see what curing agents they have in common
- to research why they work

Limitations:

For this exercise the students will need to have access to research references. This exercise could be done over the course of several weeks.

Instructions:

- Students can gather traditional medical beliefs from family and friends. These medical beliefs are generally cures for illnesses which are not satisfactorily treated by conventional medicine. Typical examples of illnesses for which there are a wide range of traditional cures are colds, warts, rheumatism, and cancer.
- After gathering these beliefs students should compare their findings and see if there are any common curative agents.
- Then students should research these curative agents to see if there have been any studies done on them and what the findings were.

For further information see: Lonnelle Aikman, *Nature's Healing Arts: From Folk Medicine to Modern Drugs.*

A Dowsing Demonstration

Age: 4th grade and up

Objectives:

- **to watch a dowsing demonstration**
- **to try dowsing themselves**

Limitations:

A dowser will be needed to do the demonstration, and an outdoor area, such as a schoolyard, is needed in which to work. Depending on the size of the class this demonstration would take one to three hours.

Instructions:

In a community there will generally be at least one active dowser whom people will call on to find water. If you don't know of one, try calling the local water drilling companies. They will know local dowsers because customers often want a dowser to suggest where to drill a well. Many "water witches" would be happy to demonstrate their skill and show the students how to try it themselves.

It is important that the teacher and students express appreciation to the dowser for taking the time to demonstrate his skill, and they should not be overly critical of dowsing. The students would probably learn more from the demonstration if the dowser would talk first about dowsing, how he learned it, and how he practices it. Students should be encouraged to make a list of questions to ask the dowser before his visit. Teachers should follow up the visit with a discussion of what was learned.

For more information on dowsing see: Evon Vogt and Ray Hyman, *Water Witching, U.S.A.*

Material Culture (Technology)

Age: 4th grade and above

Objective:

- to learn about the role of technology in traditional crafts and architecture

Needs: A tape measure and camera to document the material culture may be helpful but are not necessary. The time required for this exercise would vary greatly, depending upon its exact nature.

Instructions:

The easiest way for students to observe a craft process is to have a craftsman demonstrate his craft in the classroom. Other possibilities are to take a fieldtrip to a craftsman's shop or for students to seek out individually a craftsman and interview him.

In any of these situations it is best if the craftsman not only talks about his skill but also demonstrates the process. At this time, students can closely observe the process, noting the techniques and materials used.

Students can be more intelligent observers and ask better questions if the teacher has prepared them beforehand by describing the specific craft. The teacher can also explain how the technology of the craft reflects the local conditions and is appropriate for the techniques involved.

Besides crafts, students can also study traditional architecture. In this case students will either have to go out to study examples or the instructor can show slides to illustrate the concepts.

The science teacher will want to emphasize how traditional architecture follows the principles of appropriate technology. In order to document the buildings the students will want to make drawings of each exterior wall and floor diagrams of each floor. In order to make these to scale they will need a tape measure. If possible, they will find it helpful to talk to someone who builds such buildings.

For more information see: Warren E. Roberts, "Folk Crafts" and "Folk Architecture" in Richard M. Dorson, ed. *Folklore and Folklife.*

See also appropriate sections of essays in this workbook: "Folklore, History, and Social Studies" and "Using Local Resources."

Mathematics

Age: 4th grade through 7th grade

Objective:

- to help students develop the ability to use mathematics in everyday problems

Instructions:

Attaining this objective means more than just assigning word problems which use the mathematical techniques being taught. Students should be provided with the opportunity to deal with mathematics in their own environment in the same way as skillful adults do when confronted with a problem requiring mathematics.

Instead of relying only on textbooks and drill sheets, the teacher should encourage the students to formulate, attempt to solve, and explain their discoveries about mathematical questions arising in their own world. There are endless questions:

- How big is the classroom in area? In volume?
- What is the average distance a student travels to school?
- What is the average traveling time and cost to the school system?

Such problems not only require the use of mathematical functions but also develop the ability to know what information needs to be sought and what approximations will have to be made. Such exercises demonstrate that math may be applied to most real problems, requiring an intuitive sense beyond just the ability to multiply.

The methods of performing mathematical computations will always have to be taught as the groundwork for all mathematics, but the teacher should not stop there. By posing problems requiring folk math the teacher can show how mathematics helps us understand the world and make informed decisions. In addition, there is an aesthetic appeal in applying math to everyday situations and seeing how the world behaves in ways which mathematics can describe.

For a sample problem sheet, see the following "quilting math" exercise.

Quilting Math

How much time and expense is involved in quilting a quilt by hand?

Data:

A. A good quilter, making 12 stitches to the inch and working at top speed, cannot put more than 8 yards of quilting thread into a quilt in one hour.

B. An average quilt requires 400 yards of quilting thread to fasten the layers together.

C. An average price for quilting a quilt is $100.

Questions:

1. How soon can the quilter finish a quilt?
2. How many stitches will she make per yard of thread? Per hour?
3. How many stitches will she make in all?
4. How much will she be paid per yard of quilting thread?
5. What is the most she will earn per hour?
6. Would you work at that rate?

FOLKLORE AND ISSUES IN EDUCATION

9

Making Sense Out of Contemporary Phenomena

Objectives

- Understanding that the advent of high technology and other modern phenomena does not kill folklore, but creates new variants on old folklore themes;
- Recognizing the myriad examples of legend material available in print and electronic media today;
- Learning what shape ancient beliefs, such as belief in supernatural phenomena, may take in today's world; and
- Understanding how folklore helps Americans come to grips with such modern problems as crime, violence, the disintegration of the family, racial tension, and new values and lifestyles.

Introduction

The relationship of folklore to today's modern world may still seem an anomoly to some readers. This essay by Inta Carpenter, Associate Director of Special Projects at the Folklore Institute of Indiana University, clearly explains the way in which contemporary print and electronic media can perpetuate folklore and folk attitudes. Carpenter offers insightful comments about the function of modern folklore in our lives.

Understanding our modern world is an important issue in education today. In her essay, Carpenter uses examples from recent newspapers, magazines, and television and radio broadcasts, and describes stories and situations familiar to any contemporary American. Her goal is to suggest ways teachers may sort through the modern phenomena affecting students today and help students — and teachers themselves — better understand contemporary life by recognizing its folkloric aspects.

Making Sense Out of Contemporary Phenomena

Inta Gale Carpenter

Most people in American society would admit an important connection between folklore and faraway societies, but they would think of themselves as somehow having outgrown folklore. They are civilized, urbanized, and thereby, "unfolklorized." But they are mistaken. Just as the past was once the present and gave rise to folkloric expressions appropriate to certain life experiences, so people today generate forms infused with meanings equally appropriate to our time.

"Folklore comes early and stays late in the lives of all of us," writes folklorist Barre Toelken in his recent book *The Dynamics of Folklore* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979). Each stage of human development brings its special interests, pleasures, tasks, and points of view — hence folklore arises in part from our everyday experiences and routines. Folklore is a universal of every society; it grows out of controversy and chaos, taking on coarse and obscene forms, just as often as it evolves from order and necessity, taking on utilitarian and philosophical forms. Through folklore, we explain, joke, compete, speculate, mourn, negotiate, celebrate, remember, play, create, ridicule, and even curse. The intimate links between social life, cultural values, and folkloric expressions constitute a persuasive argument for the incorporation of folklore materials into classroom discussions.

One way to begin to understand the variety of contemporary phenomena that concern us all is to scan daily newspapers or such weeklies as *Time* magazine. If students begin with a general understanding of what folklore is and how it operates, they will quickly see, by examining items from the print media, how people immediately comment upon, structure, and interpret daily events through the folklore process. In many cases, students may be motivated to follow up the usually brief descriptions or scanty allusions they find by searching out supplemental library information, by interviewing community residents, or by attending more sensitively to the informal conversations of their own peer groups. Their involvement will bring home the point that folklore has a familiar rather than a quaint ring because all of us are still generators of folklore — even in our 20th century, technological settings. By personalizing knowledge, such a discovery makes the strongest impact on expanding minds.

Living in a Technological World

An assistant director for curriculum in the Indiana Department of Education once advised me to avoid entirely the word folklore when communicating with teachers, because the word connotes the misinformation and superstition of the uneducated, which schools have the duty to eradicate, not encourage. Such a view relegates folklore to a backwoods world and misrepresents its nature. In a technological world, every bit as much as in one more directly tied to natural phenomena, ample evidence demonstrates that people try to make sense of the events in their lives through folklore. What is more, they do so with attention to aesthetics and creativity.

Contemporary legends and jokes are perhaps the most accessible evidence of folklore's role in modern society. The legend as a genre characteristically encapsulates our encounters with the unknown — whether the supernaturally or technologically mysterious or the simply unexplainable. These seemingly realistic stories are said to have happened recently, to ordinary people, in ordinary, often nearby, locations. Although not necessarily believed by their tellers, these accounts nevertheless sound credible. Some urban legends update ancient motifs, such as the tale of the boy castrated in the restroom of a suburban shopping mall, which echoes similar atrocities reported from as early as the second and third centuries A.D. Toelken cites such legends as examples of a major theme in folk tradition: "the international minority conspiracy," whose latent message is cultural paranoia about "those people" (hippies, blacks, or any group other than one's own) who are "out to get us" and who strike in such safe, middle-class settings as shopping malls or department stores.

Conversely, legends may spring directly from recent conditions. I vividly remember my surprise at discovering that a story about the killer in the backseat — which I had believed and which had prompted me always to check my own car when driving at night — was in fact a traveling legend that first surfaced in the late sixties. What is most interesting about these stories is not whether they are true, but rather, what an analysis of them — their contents, their protagonists, the situations in which they are shared — reveals about the character of contemporary society.

Shopping malls, cars, fast-food restaurants, and their countless anonymous producers, suppliers, and clerks have displaced the extended family circle we once relied upon for our necessities. We voice our apprehension about this situation in modern narratives. For example, in the late sixties and early seventies, a particularly ubiquitous tale reported that a poisonous snake had bitten a customer at a large discount store (usually K-Mart). A 1969 reader service column (often a good source for currently circulating folklore), in the Buffalo *Evening News* printed the following;

> Q: Why hasn't your paper printed the story about the snake that crawled out of some imported goods at a local store, and bit a lady customer? C. L., Orchard Park
>
> A: Because it's not true. It's a no-no. This is one of those bizarre stories that have been making the rounds in recent weeks. It's completely without foundation. The hospitals where the woman was supposed to have been taken say it just never happened.
>
> Such a victim would have needed anti-snake serum; only the Buffalo Zoo has an ample stock handy, and it remains intact.
>
> This grew as it was told—like any good story. It ultimately became a cobra and seven little ones, which made the passage here in an Oriental rug![1]

This cautionary tale seems to reflect popular distrust of the new and impersonal business establishment and of the foreigners whose goods they market. Yet note the urgency with which the column presents "evidence" to counter the distressing possibility that the tale is true: the hospitals' denials, the need for anti-snake serum, the zoo's intact supply.

Modern legends surface, proliferate, and give way to new themes, the succession of which gauges people's changing concerns and fantasies. Jan Brunvand's *The Vanishing Hitchhiker* (1981) and *The Choking Doberman* (1984) take a fairly comprehensive look at legend themes. These seemingly trivial narratives — about flies in coke bottles or rats mixed in with Kentucky Fried Chicken, for instance — are powerful indicators of public thought and influencers of public behavior. Not too long ago newspapers reported that the makers of Bubble-Yum had hired a public relations firm to quiet consumer alarm over tales of spider eggs in the new brand of gum. McDonald's similarly invested considerable money to disprove charges of "wormburgers" at the Golden Arch. It would seem that as we venture forth from family cottages and kitchens into the world of malls and fast-food chains, we need to continually test the "what-if" factor of new contexts through the seemingly actual — but actually hypothetical — situations contemplated in the urban legends.[2]

Folklorists increasingly turn to "folk topics" — what people do or talk about when they get together — for clues to new folklore forms and themes. One constant in many conversations is confusion over changing mores. As male-female role stereotypes give way, perhaps some of these narratives covertly criticize the mother who, in pursuit of a professional life, neglects her household and exposes her family to the dangers of "eating out," or her children to the care of strangers. Or perhaps modern jokes and legends express anxiety over the more general break-up of families. Many children in any classroom have divorced parents, and some stories/legends express children's emotional doubts about their importance to their parents.

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[1] Jan Harold Brunvand, *The Vanishing Hitchhiker: American Urban Legends and their Meanings* (N.Y.: Norton, 1981) and *The Choking Doberman* (N.Y.: Norton, 1984). Most of the legend themes referred to can be found in these two books of texts and commentary.

[2] Brunvand, *Hitchhiker*, 191.

Folklorist Libby Tucker describes a situation in which members of a girl scout troop dramatized legends. In one legend, the father character says to the babysitter, who has just saved his children from a murderer, "You did well, even if you're young. Now we can marry. Divorcing is easy."[3] In such brash statements that divorce is easy, children express their sense that they are left out of consideration completely. Newspaper headlines read by children as well as adults all too frequently report, "Viciousness of child abuse is increasing" (Bloomington *Herald-Telephone*, 7 September 1984). I remember first hearing about the dead-baby joke cycle about five years ago; a friend told me about the off-handed way in which her eleven-year-old son told her a joke about abortion. When she expressed her horror, he quipped, "But grown-ups don't care about babies any more."

With this same theme, a reader service column in the *Herald-Telephone* addresses the following question on 8 August 1984:

> I recently heard on the 700 Club television program that aborted babies are being used by cosmetic companies in their products. One of the ingredients mentioned was collagen. I have been very bothered by this and would like Hot Line to find out if this is true. I have seen many products that contain collagen and I certainly don't want to use them if it comes from aborted babies. H.H. Bloomington

Hot Line answered that according to the director of the Division of Cosmetics Technology for the FDA, the information about the use of aborted human fetuses was generated by certain right-to-life groups. Although the FDA had not yet substantiated such stories, investigations were continuing. This legend has surfaced in one of today's most strident debates — between the pro-life and pro-choice groups — and demonstrates, yet again, what a powerful vehicle of communication — and defamation — folklore can be, and how quickly it responds to contemporary issues.

Other urban legends describe direct encounters with technological innovations before which humans are helpless. On National Public Radio a bank employee once recounted hilarious tales of customers' misadventures with money machines, from incredible financial bonanzas to amazingly frustrating complications. He speculated that the rapid circulation of these supposed personal experiences contributed to the initial reluctance to use the machines. Newfangled contraptions seem always to inspire man's ire, awe, or fear. Microwaves touched off only the latest of many rich cycles: "It seems there was an old lady who had been given a microwave by her children. After bathing her dog she put it in the microwave to dry it off. Naturally, when she opened the door the dog was cooked from the inside out."[4] Earlier versions of the cycle describe the fate of unlucky pets who crawled into gas ovens or clothes dryers.

Among computer specialists (or for that matter within any occupation group), technical jokes and terminology abound. In the fifties, we assured ourselves that computers could not compete with human brain power, at least not in such matters as the handling of metaphors: "The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak" was translated by the computer as "The liquor is good but the meat is terrible." Our fear of being replaced by the machine is not easily assuaged, however, and a more recent joke is ambivalent about the ultimate outcome (or maybe, as computers have become "user-friendly," we can now joke about our anxiety): "A super computer is built and all the world's knowledge is programmed into it. A gathering of top scientists punch in the question: 'Will the computer ever replace man?' Clickety, click, whir, whir and the computer lights flash on and off. Finally, a small printout emerges, saying, 'That reminds me of a story.' "[5]

Just as technology is the stuff of contemporary folklore, so technology also serves to transmit folklore, with a rapidity unimaginable — and often unacceptable — to those tied to the old notion that equates folklore with illiteracy. Ask anyone today about xerox lore, and they may not respond to the unfamiliar term; but show them an example, and it will be immediately recognizable: from the posters on office bulletin boards lamenting, "Why must I work with turkeys, when I could soar with the eagles?" to the obscene visual jokes hidden away in desk drawers.[6] To office workers these photocopied jokes and sayings are as creative and meaningful as the songs loggers or cowboys in an earlier era sang to each other.

Technology also spawns new forms, such as folk art figures carved from left-over scraps of metal in the factory or graffiti which could only be created with vibrant colors from the spray paint can and huge "canvases" of urban buildings. New mediums for folklore expression have been created, such as family photographs that encode stories and record celebrations or home movies that express values and worldview.

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[3] Libby Tucker, "The Dramatization of Children's Narratives," *Western Folklore*, 39:3 (1980), 184-97.

[4] Brunvand, *Hitchhiker*, 62.

[5] Both quoted examples are from Alan Dundes, *Interpreting Folklore* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 17, 19.

[6] See Alan Dundes and Carl R. Pagter, *Work Hard and You Shall Be Rewarded: Urban Folklore from the Paperwork Empire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978).

Continued Presence of the Supernatural

Spectral wonders live side by side with technological ones, for it seems that belief in the rational powers of the mind eternally vies with belief in the forces of the supernatural. Historians tell us that in colonial America people quite routinely trusted divine providences ("replete with ghosts and apparitions, heavenly signs and pernicious omens"), through which they believed God communicated with them.[7] Today, we tend to relegate those who cling to such beliefs to the fringes of our society, yet taken together their numbers are far from insignificant. Consider the belief in speaking in tongues; recall the seer brought in to help with the drawn-out search for the Atlanta murderer; ponder newspaper reports of violence which victims, or their relatives, credit to hoodoo, black magic, or even as a countermeasure to vampires; account for the sightings of the Loch Ness monster, Big Foot, or UFOs; rationalize the shroud of Turin; or explain the St. Christopher statues, lucky rabbits' feet, or other symbolic magical objects prominently displayed on the dashboard of a car or suspended from the rearview mirror; or attempt to dismiss the growing cycle of narratives about near-death experiences.

Under the photo of a good-looking man, in one of the many newspapers I have looked through, was a particularly grisly and tragic report: "Accused devil worshipper takes own life." The story described a seventeen-year-old found hanging from a bedsheet in his isolation cell after he had been accused of gouging out the eyes and sticking knives in the head of another teenager. He belonged to a satanic cult, the "Knights of the Black Circle," whose dozen chanting members had witnessed the ritualistic slaying "by a roaring fire in a wooded area" of an upper-middle class harbor town in New York State. To explain the murder with logic rather than attribute it to demonic forces, the article alluded to the "theft of ten bags of the drug angel dust," which the killers believed their victim had stolen from them and which police believed the cult members may have been high on during the killing.

A number of themes connected with the supernatural are considerably less life-threatening. The spectre of the benign vanishing hitchhiker, the classic automobile legend, crops up frequently. Known world-wide and traced as far back as an 1890 Russian newspaper account, it has pulled into its orbit current events, local persons, religious figures, countless specifics of places, names, photographs, clothing, and behavior of wandering ghosts. It has been the subject of popular country-western songs and television shows. A recent version incorporates the ancient motif of the heavenly messenger traveling on earth in the guise of a human. A young, handsome, blond, bearded, and long-haired man (often dressed "like a hippie" in blue jeans or in a white robe) appears on our superhighways, and occasionally even claims to be Jesus.

Obviously, then, anyone who would argue that belief in the miraculous is dead in contemporary society would quickly be proved wrong. The 1 August 1984 *USA Today* included a headline that read: " 'Miracle Infant' surprises parents, doctors with life." The article quoted the expectant mother; she had already made funeral plans because she entered the hospital "believing I'd be delivering a dead child." Pandemonium broke out when a 7 pound 7 ounce daughter was born alive. "You can tell me whatever you want about the machinery being defective and getting a false reading," said the father. "But I am convinced that she really was gone, and that it was a miracle that brought her back." Thus, in a world full of technological life-saving drugs and detectors, the unexplainable remains; and in order to understand and to establish order in seeming chaos, people turn to pre-technological answers. A not altogether different principle is at work when cancer patients give up on conventional medical wisdom and turn to natural foods or unproved drugs, or arthritis patients wear copper bracelets to effect a cure.

Even American corporations, symbolic of modernity and efficiency, become entangled in the webs of supernatural fancy and belief. The trademark for Procter & Gamble is essentially the profile of an old man's face in a crescent moon, facing left toward thirteen stars, all enclosed in a circle. The company has a historical pedigree to explain the evolution of this insignia, but many people contend it is really a Satanic symbol referring to P&G's support of a demonic cult. Supposedly, the founder long ago made a pact with the devil, which guaranteed his company's prosperity if the devil's sign were placed on every product.

These rumors seem to have begun in 1980 in connection with the rise of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon's Unification church and concern that P&G was backing the "Moonies" financially. Later, the fear of "real Satanism" among various fundamentalist Christians made the trademark stories seem plausible, and many versions spread via church bulletins and radio talk shows. P&G eventually sued eight individuals, seven of whom were Amway distributors. After quieting in 1983, the rumor "rather unexplainably has surfaced and taken on a new life in 1984," a P&G spokesman is quoted as saying in the *Herald-Telephone's* Hot Line column of 18 August 1984.

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[7] Richard M. Dorson, *American Folklore* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 24-38.

Violence in Everyday Life

Today's urban dwellers are particularly attuned to the possibility that random violence may break forth in the routine of their daily lives, and for them, "muggers that stalk prove even more terrifying than ghosts that walk."[8] Richard Dorson in his chapter on "Crimelore" in *Land of the Millrats* demonstrates how muggings, holdups, robberies, rapes, murders, assaults, break-ins, vandalism, thefts of cars and car parts prompt cycles of tales. Survivor-victims seek a catharsis by telling the stories, and their listeners are provided with a way of absorbing survival techniques. Grounded in personal experiences, these crime tales nevertheless bear the hallmarks of folkloric narrative. They depend upon formulaic character types and actions (clever robbers as tricksters, assaulters as ogres, bystanders as valiant heroes, police as simpletons) and traditional patterns of storytelling style (internal dialogue, repetition, a mood of suspense building toward a climax). Passed on orally whenever people gather and talk, these narratives are also found in newspapers and heard in courtrooms and on radio and television talk shows.

Their circulation not only results in an ever-widening pool of second-hand retellings, but also gives rise to beliefs and superstitions about how to ward off crime (wear your mink coat inside out; walk only in the middle of the side walk) and to jokes, in which people struggle to contain the horror by bringing it to more manageable levels. The siege of killings at McDonald's in the summer of 1984 launched a series of morbid jokes, and the event itself quickly was labeled the "McMassacre." Shortly after the Guyana mass-suicide of 1978, I remember standing in an impatient crowd on a chilly winter night waiting to be let into a concert, when someone yelled out, "Let us in or we'll all drink Kool-Aid." It was an ultimate threat to the bar owner, yet a humorous one, and most of us responded with laughter.

In first-hand accounts (called personal experience narratives by folklorists), the victim describes a particularly frightening crime encounter. Listeners later repeat memorable episodes at second hand, and actual events gradually mingle with the embroidered and apocryphal to form a cycle of stories. No one is immume from attack, not even an athletic white male such as the recently emigrated Greek colonel in the following account, who lives in a posh New York apartment building:

> As part of his personal fitness regimen, he jogged around the block every morning at seven a.m. This particular morning as he completed his circuit and entered his apartment building, a stranger followed him inside, past the doorman. Assuming him to be an occupant of the building, the colonel held the elevator door open for him, pressed the button for his own floor, and asked the other which floor he wanted. The stranger whipped out a knife, pressed the blade against the colonel's stomach, and growled, "I'm going to your apartment." As soon as they entered the apartment, the stranger demanded to know where the colonel kept his ties, then bound and gagged him. The robber helped himself to suits and the stereo, warned his victim not to call the police for thirty minutes, and made his exit. The colonel freed himself after a few minutes, called the police right away, and waited for two hours for them to come, only to hear them say there was nothing they could do.[9]

But the robber does not always walk away with his loot. *Woman's World* of 20 April 1982 prints a very popular legend that began to circulate in the early eighties:

> A weird thing happened to a woman at work. She got home one afternoon and her German shepherd was in convulsions, so she rushed the dog to the vet, then raced home to get ready for a date. As she got back in the door, the phone rang. It was the vet, telling her that two human fingers had been lodged in the dog's throat. The police arrived and they all followed a bloody trail to her bedroom closet, where a young burglar huddled—moaning over his missing thumb and forefinger.[10]

As personalized crime narratives assume legendary form, two especially vulnerable targets emerge: women and teenagers. Characteristically, the villains are males. The themes of the horror legends told by and about teens are familiar to most of us. The hook man threatens a couple parked on lover's lane; a coed dies clawing at the dorm door following the attack of a hatchet man; a babysitter is harrassed by obscene phone calls from a man who turns out to be on an upstairs extension. In these tales, teenagers test adult situations — sexual license, staying out late, playing house — and usually run into trouble. Implicitly, then, these texts prescribe the correct behavior necessary to avoid danger and actual violence. In addition, the families depicted in these texts have relinquished to outside agencies the responsibilities they once assumed for themselves. One tale, for example, reports the sexual crime resulting from a school sex education program: a boy supposedly goes home and rapes his little sister in order to practice what he learned in class that day.[11]

The telling and retelling of most modern legends and jokes probably serves to perpetuate and reinforce community norms better than any moral didacticism on the part of parents or teachers. Folklore nurtures the newest of emerging values right along with the older ones. Adolescents are particularly good barometers of changing social attitudes. They must sort out their own values and goals, and as they move out from home into the larger world, the world's dangers seem to close in on them. So perhaps with the topic of changing social values, it is especially fruitful to go to the source, to discuss with teens themselves their own major fears and fantasies as expressed in their favorite "true" stories and jokes.

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[8] Richard M. Dorson, *Land of the Millrats: Urban Folklore in Indiana's Calumet Region* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), "Crimelore," 213-31.

[9] Ibid., 217.

[10] Brunvand, *Doberman*, 3-4.

[11] Ibid., 132.

People, Places, Events

" 'Forward, harch!' for academies" proclaims a headline in *USA Today*. Within minutes of their arrival in Colorado Springs, young men from fifty states and several foreign countries begin an initiation ritual into a new group — the Air Force Academy. They are immediately dubbed *doolies* (a term based on the Greek word for slave) and only two out of three of them will make it to graduation. A large part of their task in the first weeks and months will be to crack the code of their new environment, and much of this code is "written" in the language of folklore, particularly of custom and jargon. "Seems like every time I turn around, someone's chewing me out. This morning at breakfast, I got yelled at for drinking my milk too fast, letting my shoulder touch the back of my chair, putting my fork in the wrong place and a dozen other things," the newspaper reports one student as saying.

Along with the boys at the Academy, we are all members of groups, and both consciously and unconsciously we set ourselves apart as "special," or simply different, through language, rituals, costumes, customs, and eventually narratives about a shared past full of reminiscences about favorite characters and times. In other words, people in groups generate folklore about groups. In executive cafeterias new employees strive to master the etiquette of "eating for success," a code every bit as elaborate and esoteric, though perhaps less visible, than that which binds together Shriners or members of Job's Daughters. Through adherence to clothing conventions, preppies set themselves apart from punks, country-club members distinguish themselves from the Archie Bunkers in Queens. We all remember the "secret" clothing codes of grade school: red on Friday meant a girl had "gone all the way"; pink and green on Thursday indicated the wearer was "queer."

Recently earrings have become a symbol of groupness, and in her syndicated newspaper column (*Herald-Telephone*, 6 August 1984) June Reinisch of the Kinsey Sex Research Institute tries to unscramble their meaning:

> Question: I understand that some gay men now wear a single earring in their right ear as a mark of recognition. Recently I've seen a few women wearing one or more earrings—but only in their right ear. Does this indicate they, too, are gay?
>
> Answer: No, it just means you've seen people who are following the current fashion fad of wearing ear decorations asymmetrically. Both men and women are doing this, and it doesn't signify that the person is either heterosexual or homosexual.

Ann Landers is not so sure. When she is asked essentially the same question, she replies (*Herald-Telephone*, 15 August 1984):

> Dear Loo: Single earrings are worn by straights as well as gays, which answers the question you didn't come right out and ask, but I'm sure you were wondering about. Those single earrings are just a fad—like a crewcut, a ponytail or a Mohawk.
>
> When a man is straight, whether the earring is in the left ear or the right ear, it has no special significance. With gay males, however, I am told there is a specific meaning. An earring worn in the left ear signifies the wish to be the dominant party in a relationship. When the earring is worn in the right ear the male is making it known he prefers to play the submissive role. I am told that this code is said to be understood by homosexuals all over the world.

Stories as well as customs and costumes reveal the nature of a group. A 30 July 1984 *Herald-Telephone* article profiles Jerome Wood, a 47-year-old carnival barker who likes to tell about his occupational group:

> "Hey you can use your own judgment whether they're true or not." He just tells them how he's heard them, with no guarantees.
>
> Used to be that nobody could win at the carnival unless you wanted him to. "We used to pay people to carry teddy bears and things on the midway," Wood said. That way, people didn't get too discouraged—and girlfriends would continue to press boyfriends to win one, too. Hardly anyone did.

Just about anything can unite people, either for lifetimes (family reunions are a traditional celebration of the blood relationship bonding this group) or in more transitory and anonymous ways. For example, the opening of White Castle in Bloomington in the summer of 1984 caused quite a flurry as like-minded afficionados of the tiny burger jammed the parking lot and waited in lines fifteen cars deep at the drive-in window. Two uniformed guards had been hired by the firm to "direct traffic" (and to add to the mystique): "White Castle—the caviar of Middle America—has become as much a happening as a meal," reported the local paper (*Herald-Telephone*, 8 July 1984).

People also use language to set themselves apart and to encode values. Regional speech variations are the most obvious example, but still finer distinctions include the "rappin' " now so popular from the black ghettos, or the snobbish euphemisms of the wealthy that describe a room loaded with expensive stuff as "tastefully appointed," or old and rich women as "elegant" (*Herald-Telephone*, 26 July 1984). In Hollywood, reportedly language — like the right car or the right address — is used to impart status and savvy; a *Newsweek* (25 June 1984) article on "The Talk of Tinseltown" includes a glossary of movie business terms — high concept, heat, wide break, turnaround, the back end — which are used according to strict rules. Mass communication disseminates speech innovations so rapidly today that almost as quickly as they are created, they are preempted or parodied by the mainstream, and fade from use among their originators.

Intimately connected with values, language reflects the continuing double standard in American society. Compare, for example, the connotations (and stereotypes) evoked by "bachelor" versus "old maid." The word bachelor in no way implies an absence of sexual activity whereas old maid does. Similarly, think about "dirty old man" versus "little old lady," and the implication that even an aged male is expected to continue at least to attempt sexual adventures whereas comparably aged females are left sexless.[12] By becoming aware of biases hidden in our language, we become self-conscious about our social attitudes.

A story about the "running of the bulls" in Pomplona, Spain, suggests several fruitful avenues to explore in the classroom. Under the picture of a group of men and bulls is this caption: "Angry bulls chase daredevil runners along a 900-yard route to the bull ring Sunday, second day of the annual San Fermin festival. . . . The event was popularized in Ernest Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises*; actress Margaux Hemingway was there filming a documentary on her grandfather." Ritual, obviously, is not a long-lost paganistic custom, as some might think. Rather, rituals continue to fulfill deep psychological and social functions. They also point to cultural differences. Americans, for example, do not "run" bulls, but "throw" them in rodeos. Why the difference? The "daredevils" in Spain find counterparts in the activities of American teens who dare one another in the game "chicken."

The bull-running ritual is part of the San Fermin festival. A resurgence of festivals has occurred in the United States in the last decade. In North Carolina, a "hog-hollerin' " contest proclaims regional identity, as do these examples: in Texas a "Watermelon Thump," in northern Indiana a festival of Auburns, Cords, and Duesenbergs. These events are all expressions of self, whether in the form of the boosterism of small towns or the ethnic pride of a group of people.

State, regional, national, and international individuals and families catch our eye. Our interest in Princess Di generates both awe-struck admiration and imitation (the haircuts, the clothes, the christening of babies) and our irreverent jests. Michael Jackson's phenomenal rise to stardom is a good example of the process of hero formation and subsequent defamation. At first, grade schoolers, particularly the girls, exchanged a varied repertoire of rumors about Jackson's sexual preference or about the reasons for his single white glove; they tacked up his posters and accumulated all the paraphernalia. But as the glitter faded, the jokes and parodies began: Jackson wore the single glove because he couldn't afford the other one; Brooke Shields stopped seeing Michael because he didn't "Thriller" anymore.

This folkloric attention is by nature ephemeral, because it speaks to and expresses moods and attitudes of the moment. Our attachment to Jack Kennedy and our reluctance to face his loss were quickly symbolized in the rumors shortly after his assassination that he had not died, but had been wounded, was paralyzed, and was living on some remote island. A reverse rumor circulated about Paul McCartney: the photo on the album cover of *Abbey Road* and the lyrics of one cut when played backwards provided the proof that McCartney was dead.

But local heroes (and antiheroes) grab our attention as forcefully as those seen on "Entertainment Tonight." In recent months, lottery winners have become the unwitting heroes of our accounts about the strategies that led to their sudden acquisition of wealth. Whether heard second hand or reported in newspapers, these stories of winning assume a structured form: "Mrs. Yates said her husband Charley, 33, gave her the final $40 he had to his name last week and told her to play the lottery." But sometimes we find ourselves admiring antiheroes. For instance, in the 1970s, an eccentric hermit living under a bridge in the Calumet Region of Indiana was accepted, even semi-adopted, by the community. He was as dirty and seemingly shiftless as the "hippies" the residents denounced, but he was allowed to "loaf" in a society that values work. The local fast-food restaurant fed him virtually for free, and neighbors related elaborate and varying stories, mostly of the tragic loss of a sweetheart, to justify his actions.

Why do we grope for explanations for the hermit when we do not proffer equal charity toward "welfare cheats," "winos," or hippies? The Indianapolis *Star*, 14 May 1978, gives a sampling of the "comforting, sometimes fictional captions" people use to explain the disturbing presence of New York City's bag ladies: "There are crossed wires under their matted hair. They are there by choice. They are gripped by paranoia that compels them to flee human warmth. They are really eccentric matrons who live on Sutton Place or Beacon Hill, donning rags daily to sally into the streets, a bizarre alternative to bridge club."

But lest we assume that only big cities contain such "freaks," an article in the *Herald-Telephone*, 31 July 1984, reminds us that rural settings are equally hospitable: "When Fleta and Kermit [name withheld] were delivered to the custody of the Indiana Department of Correction to begin twoyear prison terms on Friday, they left an estimated 10-30 dogs behind, locked in their home north of Spencer." A picture of the home dominates the front page, showing a shack built from assorted materials and "repaired" with rags and cardboard packaging with shadowy forms of dogs peering through the windows, and a yard littered with a broken washing machine, scattered pots and pans, and unidentifiable debris. According to the news reports, it was a place of "substandard sanitary conditions, where animal and human waste were common in all rooms of the house." Narratives, undoubtedly, circulated among neighbors and city officials dealing with the situation. The story reminded me of reports some ten years ago of the equally squalid living conditions of the Bouvier sisters, relatives of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. These two women were said to be eating from tin cans, and never washed dishes, or apparently themselves, while the family mansion deteriorated around them.

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[12] Dundes, *Interpreting Folklore*, 160-75.

These many examples serve to suggest how all of us — in any age group or economic bracket — traditionalize our experiences and how we shape our most deeply felt values into appropriate forms. Granted, folklore is just one of many avenues open to us in our attempt to make sense of human life, to find its beauty, and to seek entertainment from it. We all turn to libraries, concert halls, museums, and churches as well. But perhaps most characteristically we turn to each other, to share with our friends and relations — and occasionally with sympathetic strangers — what gives us joy or causes us pain, what makes us laugh or confronts us with mystery and fear. Life is the stuff of folklore, but we are its shapers, as we turn experiences and needs into appropriate and aesthetic folklore forms.

If this essay has raised rather than answered questions, it is because part of what we do through folklore is pose questions for which there are neither right, nor wrong, nor easy answers. And we often raise such issues in symbolic and therefore oblique ways that are difficult to decode. Simultaneously, folklore adds satisfaction and beauty to our lives, through folk forms of art, dance, music, and play that people have created over generations of living together or which we improvise during the many moments of our social interaction with each other.

What makes folklore indispensable in the classroom is our intimate first-hand knowledge of it, and through it, of ourselves and others. It is a knowledge too often overlooked and therefore not used in formal educational settings. Teachers who help students become self-conscious about how everyone uses folklore, and why, will help them move naturally toward a better grasp of such large and abstract concepts as cultural continuity and diversity, human relations, race and ethnic groups, sexual mores, cultural values and aesthetics. Folklore is a classroom tool that effectively connects the world in textbooks to the everyday world of the student and which demonstrates that reflection, analysis, and creativity are innate characteristics of human beings, which the school refines and enlarges rather than engenders. Teachers who turn to folklore will have at their disposal a tool that fosters the kind of rapport fundamental to lasting instruction.

Key Works

Brunvand, Jan Harold. *The Choking Doberman*. N.Y.: Norton, 1984.
The most recent volume of modern legends; it includes sample texts, brief histories of the development of themes, and straightforward analysis.

———————. *The Vanishing Hitchhiker: American Urban Legends and their Meanings*. N.Y.: Norton, 1981.
Essentially the same approach as *Doberman*.

Dorson, Richard M. *America in Legend: Folklore from the Colonial Period to the Present*. N.Y.: Pantheon, 1973.
Makes the case that American folklore reflects and explains the American historical experience. Divides American history into four "lifestyles": religious, democratic, economic, and humane.

———————. *Handbook of American Folklore*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983.
Includes over sixty brief, readable articles that range freely and broadly over folklore topics, techniques, theory, and use.

———————. *Land of the Millrats: Urban Folklore in Indiana's Calumet Region*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981.
Shows the rich and varied folklore that exists in a heavily industrialized region of the U.S.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. "The Future of Folklore Studies in America: The Urban Frontier." *Folklore Forum*, Vol. 16, no. 2 (Fall 1983), 175-235.
A long article focusing on the traditions that are "home-grown" in urban soil.

Folklore journals, particularly *Indiana Folklore* and the last decade of *Western Folklore*, are worth consulting. Each concentrates on contemporary forms of folklore. *Indiana Folklore* gives a good sampling of the supernatural themes found in the Midwest: psychic fairs, ghostly women, witchcraft, haunted cemeteries — and jetliners, UFOs, and Halloween apparitions.

Folklore in Modern Media

Age: junior high and high school

Objectives:

- **promoting awareness of folklore in mass media**
- **using popular media (television, radio, magazines, etc.) as educational tools**
- **expanding awareness of the perpetuation of folk attitudes and forms in modern life**

Instructions:

As the preceding essay suggests, the print media is a rich source for evidence of how folklore reports and interprets contemporary phenomena. Students might attempt to broaden this perspective by comparing and contrasting a variety of media and by working in groups of three or four to do collecting and analysis. They could focus on the plethora of topics that surface or teachers could assign specific subjects to explore. Likely possibilities include these different media:

- oral channels
- newspapers and magazines
- cartoons (*New Yorker*, Doonesbury, newspapers, popular magazines)
- television shows and commercials
- radio talk shows, such as "Sunday Night Live," a call-in program in Indianapolis that is very rich in folk topics and folk interaction.

A "scrapbook" of items collected could be made individually, or collectively. Actual stories from newspapers or magazines, and cartoons clipped from these sources (or xeroxed copies) could be included, as well as brief synopses or excerpts from television and radio programs. Advanced technology available to some students and/or schools may permit audio or video copies of electronic media as well.

The student groups should then compare and contrast what they find in terms of content, style, intended audience, effectiveness and scope of communication.

Modern Occupational Folklore

Age: junior high and high school

Objectives:

- **increasing communication between students and their parents and parents' colleagues**
- **helping with career choices through better understanding of modern occupations**
- **understanding the types of folklore perpetuated through work settings**

Instructions:

Students might begin with themselves, and their own families, to collect occupational folklore.

- First of all, they might want to write down (or better yet tell each other) what they know of the jokes, personal experience narratives, celebrations, rituals, pranks, xerox lore, "characters," or jargon connected with their parents' jobs. This presentation could be recorded.
- Secondly, they could interview their parents to expand and clarify their information.
- Next, they could interview their parents' co-workers and, if possible, visit the work place and make observations.

Questions of parents and co-workers could include:

- How does someone learn this job?
- What do experienced workers do to newcomers to make them become "part of the gang"?
- What jokes do the workers share?
- Are there special ways of celebrating holidays, birthdays, or other occasions on the job?
- What are the relationships between the "boss" and the workers?
- How has the job changed over the years?

If the workplace can be visited, students should note the following:

- What type of cartoons/signs/xerox lore are tacked up on walls and bulletin boards;
- Where workers congregate on breaks, and who "hangs out" with whom during breaks;
- Physical arrangements of offices, desks, and other workspace;
- Objects on desks, windowsills, or bookshelves that personalize the workspace.

Students and teachers should be aware that some information collected may be sensitive or controversial, such as the "white collar crime" of bringing home office supplies; dirty jokes told in the workplace; or slurs on the character of bosses or co-workers. Students should be encouraged to collect this information when it is relevant, but warned to treat any delicate information professionally, i.e., by using pseudonymns to avoid incrimination and hurt feelings.

After the collection and analysis are completed for individual occupations, students could compare their findings and talk about the values reflected in the folklore of specific occupations, the self-images conveyed, and the "characteristics" of the different jobs. They will have gained an insider's view in the process.

Folklore of the Modern Teenager

Age: 13 and older, although a simplified version could be adapted for younger children

Objectives:

- becoming aware of one's own peer group folklore
- examining modern themes in teenage folklore
- exploring modes of interaction, social and aesthetic values, and topics that cause students anxiety

Instructions:

Teenagers could be asked to construct a repertoire of their own currently circulating folklore. What jokes, legends, and stories are they telling each other; what graffiti adorns the bathroom walls; what songs or parodies do they sing at parties; what are their superstitions, customs, rituals, games; what is the most current jargon?

Students may collect this information from themselves, from each other, or from students in other grades or schools. Students should be encouraged to collect the information in natural settings: on the school bus, in the lunchroom, at athletic meets, in the locker room, at the local "burger joint," etc.

The teacher may wish to devise a list of "folklore to look for" before collection begins. (Students may be involved in the formulation of this list in an in-class "brainstorming" session.)

When collection is complete, this repertoire can be analyzed in terms of frequency of certain forms, their duration, the style and form they take, how they are transmitted, their meaning, the symbolism they use, their function and situation of use, their intended audience.

Understanding Modern Anxieties through Folklore

Age: may be adapted to many age groups, but best suited for junior or senior high

Objectives:

- learning to deal with the anxieties of modern life creatively
- examining all angles of issues that frighten or concern young people today

Instructions:

Students should be asked to pick an area that causes them particular anxiety — such as illness, criminal attack, old age, rape, death, or nuclear attack. They should then be encouraged to gather folkloric materials in appropriate institutional settings — hospitals, police stations, retirement centers, women's shelters, hospices and funeral homes.

If it is not possible to visit institutions, or if students have anxieties not connected to an institutional setting, they should be encouraged to combine interviews with other concerned individuals (students, parents, relatives, etc.), with library research on the topic, and folklore perpetuated about the topic in print and electronic media (cf., exercise in this section, Folklore in Modern Media).

After collecting data, students should write a report and/or give an oral report on how the folklore about the topic helped them come to terms with their anxiety.

This exercise may be simplified and shortened for use in classes of younger students. For instance, the teacher can devote one class session to a discussion of "the things we have heard" about such topics as muggings or nuclear melt-downs, explain which have basis in truth, and how all of them express attitudes and beliefs about modern problems.

10

Using Local Resources

Objectives

- Reaching beyond the traditional uses of community resources to include more innovative uses of these resources;
- Recognizing the physical resources available in your community;
- Learning simple methods for utilizing the human resources available in your community; and
- Realizing that much help can be found on both the local and state levels for special projects utilizing local resources.

Introduction

Folklore is so very useful in classroom settings for the simple reason that its materials are accessible all around us. In this essay, Betty Belanus, former Folk Arts Coordinator for the Indiana Arts Commission, lends her expertise in identifying the local resources that abound in every community. A special section of the essay also tells where to turn at the state level for help with community projects.

The issues in education addressed by this essay are:

- *motivation of students by means of the introduction of material relevant to their own lives and,*
- *improved relations between schools and communities by involving students in community research and involving the community in school projects.*

Using Local Resources

Betty J. Belanus

More and more teachers today are looking to the communities surrounding their schools for educational resources. Using local resources in the classroom can have many advantages — for students, teachers, and the community at large. Involving students in the study of their own family and community invariably heightens their sense of self-value and pride in their home region. The use of local resources in school studies, moreover, has been proven to motivate students who are otherwise bored (as with some gifted students) or on the verge of dropping out because of limited interest in "book learning."[1]

Many communities seem to be growing away from their schools, and many people grumble about the poor quality of education, the bad manners of students, and the high price of maintaining schools. Establishing a more personal relationship between school and community may be one giant step toward changing these attitudes.

This essay discusses the "nuts and bolts" of using local resources in your classroom projects. It is very possible that your school has already tapped into many local resources. Classes may frequently visit local museums, participate in "pioneer days" festivals, and invite local individuals knowledgeable on some subject (such as Indian lore) into the classroom for presentations. But, in case you have not taken full advantage of some of these resources, or if you have grown tired of using the same resources in the same old ways, you will find this chapter useful.

Knowing What You Are Looking For

The very first step in using local resources is knowing what you want to do. This depends, of course, on the classes you are teaching and the way you wish to use folklore materials within the classroom. The other essays in this workbook offer you many options for using folklore in the classroom. Before and after reading this essay, you may wish to jot down a few notes concerning your desire to use local resources and the goals you hope to attain. This will help you plan your use of local resources wisely.

For the purpose of this essay, local folklore resources will be divided into **physical resources,** such as museum collections, folk architecture, and artifacts in personal collections, and **human resources,** including folk artists and other tradition bearers as well as useful contacts and community volunteers to aid in folklore projects.

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[1] See Eliot Wigginton's introduction to *The Foxfire Book* (Garden City, N. J.: Anchor Press, 1972), 9-14.

Carefully plan the goals and objectives of your use of local resources. Using resources from outside the classroom can be time consuming and, at times, frustrating — especially the first time around. But, the rewards are usually worth the effort. The resources are abundant, and often the community itself will be a great help. As you read this chapter, think about your own community, and list the local resources you know about off the top of your head. If you find that you cannot use some of the ideas yourself, please pass them on to another teacher.

Physical Resources

One of the best physical resources in a community or county is the local museum, or other repository of historic artifacts and documents pertaining to the area's history. Usually, this collection is maintained by the local historical society, although in some communities it is owned and operated by another group, such as the D.A.R. It may even be located in the county courthouse, local library, armory, or some other municipal building. If you are not aware of the location of your community's collection of artifacts, inquire at your local library.

A typical collection of a local museum in Indiana includes such items as tools, quilts and coverlets, costumes, household utensils, toys, personal items such as hair ornaments or razors, paintings by local artists, and items brought back from trips abroad by area residents. Often local museums emphasize some aspect of the local geography or economy — such as pearl button-making machines in areas along the state's rivers or artifacts of underground mining in the state's coal-producing areas.

These artifacts present an almost infinite number of possibilities for studying local folklore. However, local museums are typically severely underused because of lack of fulltime personnel or lack of proper heating or air-conditioning. Many schools do make annual trips with students to the museums. But, a brief, once a year visit is not adequate for proper study of the many interesting folk artifacts in a museum's collection.

Along with other artifacts, museums often act as repositories for written manuscripts: diaries, letters, account books, school autograph books. Collections of old photographs and photo albums are also usually present. These paper artifacts should be studied carefully for their folkloric content. They present myriad opportunities for class projects in many subjects.

The problem with using these resources for classroom projects is, of course, their often fragile nature, and the understandable reluctance of a repository (historical society, library, or museum) to let them leave the site. These problems can be solved only through building a trust and a working relationship between you and the keepers of the collection. In many cases, the keepers are very willing to see the artifacts being used for educational purposes, if they can be assured that no harm will come to the precious objects. With objects too large or fragile to be removed to the classroom for study, photographs or drawings could serve the purpose for in-class study.

Using the resources of the local museum, of course, requires some background work. Visit the museum with an open mind, and note the aspects of the collections you would like your students to study. Keep an eye out, especially, for objects that are obviously underdocumented. Are some tools unlabeled because no one knew what their function was? Is there an "autograph" quilt with many local names on it, but no information attached? Are there old photographs of unidentified buildings, no longer standing in the community? Chances are your students can become involved in the documentation of these artifacts, to the mutual benefit of students and repositories.

The above discussion may seem to emphasize the use of artifacts for courses in history. However, the artifacts can be equally useful for any number of courses. Here are some suggestions:

- Language arts or English classes may search old documents for interesting word usages, letter writing styles, or poetry.
- Economics or accounting classes may use account books to discover means of bookkeeping in earlier times, and the prices of items 50 or 100 years ago.
- Home economics classes may study textiles or costumes for style and fabric content.
- Old school books, often deposited in local museums, can be of interest in many subjects, comparing the type of information they contain and attitudes they project with today's treatment of the subject.

It is, indeed, hard to anticipate many of the "finds" available in local museums. For more information on using local museums as resources, see suggested references listed at the end of this essay.

Folk Architecture

Another rich physical resource in most areas is architecture. The term "folk architecture" refers to structures built with traditional patterns in mind, usually without the aid of formal floor plans, and usually utilizing materials indigenous to or plentiful in the building area. Folk architecture often reflects the ethnic or regional background of its original builder/owner, and also reflects the needs and resources of the builder/owner. For more discussion of folk architecture, refer to the essays "Folklore, History, and Social Studies" and "Using Folklore to Teach Mathematics and Science" in this workbook.

In most areas, folk architectural buildings are found in older parts of the town or city, and in rural areas. Most counties have at least one log structure intact, although often moved from its original site or reconstructed. Barns dot the landscape, many of them of folk construction. Older churches of folk construction are also not hard to find.

Chances are, there are some historical architecture enthusiasts in your area who have been working for several years surveying, restoring, and generally acting as champions for historic structures of the area. These groups have worked to save many older buildings in danger of demolition, have added buildings of specific historical significance to the National Register of Historic Places, and have worked to inform the public about the value of historic buildings.

While these groups have often stressed the value of homes and public buildings planned by architects, or the homes of prominent historical figures, or those displaying some unique academic style, many times they have worked to identify and save buildings with folk architectural roots. If your community has such a group, familiarize yourself with its work. If you are not sure whether there is such a group in your area, and the local historical society or public library is not sure either, contact the statewide preservation groups noted at the end of this essay.

Once you have located the significant folk architecture of your area, what are you going to do with it? One possibility is to work with the local (or state) historic preservation group to survey a particular street, neighborhood, or rural route. Local or state groups can provide information on survey techniques, and on methods of researching specific structures through court records, tax records, and other public documents. Other studies involving folk architecture may include researching a specific building for possible inclusion on the National Register. Write to the Division of Historic Preservation for the necessary forms.

Buildings are fascinating, but so are other aspects of folk architecture. The use of space inside a house, for instance, reflects the lifestyle of the inhabitants. The way a farmstead is laid out (not only buildings but fields, fences, and other physical features) may be studied. Also, the way lawns are decorated, year round or seasonally, reveals social and cultural aesthetics and values. In urban or suburban areas, people "personalize" development houses or rows of apartments to express folk attitudes and preferences. In other words, there can be a lot more to utilizing elements of folk architecture in your local area than locating the oldest log structure in the county! In addition, studying attitudes and lifestyles associated with the structures in their area can help students become more aware of their local folk culture, both historical and modern.

Other Physical Resources

Another significant local resource is the cemetery. Discussion of the use of cemeteries in historical studies is located in the chapter "Folklore, History, and Social Studies." Some Junior Historical Societies have undertaken cemetery studies that can serve as models. See the reference at the end of "Folklore, History, and Social Studies."

Frank Brown, a fisherman, from Merom, Sullivan County. Courtesy, Indiana Arts Commission.

Private collections of folk artifacts are not as easily accessible as those housed in public museums, but they are worth pursuing. Folk craftspeople, for instance, often have wonderful collections of their work and the work of others in their homes. Antique dealers often have stockpiles of handmade furniture, baskets, and quilts. Amateur archaeologists or other hobbyists may have collections of Indian artifacts, old tools, historic farm machinery, or handmade lace. Further along in this chapter, we will discuss how to locate these people and their collections.

In summary, the physical folklore resources of a local community are many and varied. They require some time and effort to locate, but most are, and always have been, "right under your nose." They present excellent possibilities for mutual cooperation between students and the community.

Human Resources

Human resources also come in a variety of types on the local level. In folklore studies, the most obvious human resource that teachers often wish to locate are folk artists themselves. Folk artists are easier to find by means of local contacts: those people who know the community well because they have either lived in or served the community for a number of years. These contacts should be the first human resources to become acquainted with.

If you are a long-time resident of the area your school is located in, you can serve as your own first contact, depending on what type of folk artist you are looking for. Do you know a traditional quilter or tatter, a Ukrainian Easter egg maker, or someone who makes his or her own butter, or someone who turns factory scraps into folk sculpture? There will probably be folk artists who live down the street from you, go to your church, or belong to the same service organization as you. Now that you are learning the breadth of the field of folklore, you can recognize these people as folk artists and begin your list of human resources with them.

Your students can also be great contacts. In many cases, their families have lived in the community for a long time, and aunts and uncles, grandmothers, and family friends yield a number of folk artists. Students may recognize themselves as budding (or accomplished!) folk artists as they realize how much they have learned about canning, trapping, traditional music, or telling stories from their relatives and friends.

Going beyond a sphere of friends and acquaintances takes some initiative, but mostly follows common sense patterns. If you are interested in finding some traditional quilters, for instance, an excellent contact is your local Home Demonstration Agent. The agent is in touch with many local women and their families, and takes charge of such activities as the crafts and food entries at the County Fair. I have never personally come away from a meeting with a Home Demonstration Agent without leads. Farm Agents and 4-H agents are also great sources of information.

If it is traditional musicians you are seeking, one of the best places to begin is at the local music supply store. Guitarists need new strings, harmonica players come in to see what's new, and store owners usually keep up on local musicians, both professional and amateur. Other retail stores that often provide useful leads are craft stores, hardware stores, and feed and grain stores.

Local newspaper editors and/or reporters (especially those who write about remote locations and do human interest stories) can often provide excellent leads. Librarians are also often good sources of information on local people. Chances are your community harbors one or more amateur historian who knows almost everyone in the county.

If you are in an urban setting and want to locate ethnic folk artists, a good place to start is at an ethnic church. Make an appointment with the pastor or priest and ask him about the folk arts and artists among his congregation or parish. Also, ethnic associations such as Polish American or Irish American clubs can prove useful. Some cities have organizations, such as the Indianapolis International Center, which serve as clearinghouses for information on local ethnic groups.

Senior Citizen Centers or organizations often prove a good source of information as well, but a word of caution is worthwhile here. While many folk artists and resource people may come from the over-sixty generation, you must keep in mind that all older people are not automatically good sources of folklore, and that you should not neglect the traditions of younger people in your search for good folklore resources.

Folk artists themselves are excellent contacts. Once you have located one traditional musician, for instance, you may tap into the community of traditional musicians in the area. Finding human folklore resources can generally be likened to throwing a pebble in a pond — the circle keeps widening and widening. One of the exercises at the end of this essay presents a model for a resource guide you and your students can develop through the use of local contacts.

Such a guide can be an invaluable resource not only for your classes, but for the whole school, community, and state. Several classes could join forces in the effort, and the local community could become involved as well.

Volunteers for Folklore Projects

This brings us to the concept of involving volunteers from the community in classroom folklore projects. In most cases, local folk artists identified and called upon to demonstrate or perform for classes will be volunteering their time and talents, since few schools have budgets to pay such artists. Most local folk artists will do this cheerfully, as long as they perceive an interest by the class and teacher. The key to a successful visit by a local folk artist is good preparation by the teacher beforehand. Folk artists respond especially well to informed and imaginative questions from students. The lasting value of a visit by a folk artist can be enhanced by having students actually interview the artist. Such an exercise is suggested at the end of this essay. Other valuable guidelines for presenting local folk artists in the classroom are available from the Indiana Arts Commission's Folk Arts Coordinator, who has aided a number of schools in folk arts projects.

Folk artists themselves are only one type of volunteer that may be needed to carry out a folklore project in your classroom. Another type of potential volunteer presenter is a local folklore enthusiast or interpreter. Such people have learned a great deal about local folklore because of a special interest — say, in traditional music or weaving — but they are not actually part of the tradition themselves. These people can be extremely good contacts, but are also usually accomplished demonstrators and performers.

Professional folklorists advocate the use of "authentic" folk artists — those who have grown up learning the tradition they perform — as often as possible in folklore presentations. However, a traditional spinner, blacksmith, or storyteller is sometimes hard to find in a community. Also, authentic folk artists are often too shy, elderly, or inexperienced in working with a crowd to be effective presenters. Live classroom presentations, therefore, may have to rely on the folklore enthusiast/interpreter. It is important, however, to recognize the difference between an authentic tradition bearer and an interpreter — one who has learned a folk art recently from a book, for example, or has moved to Indiana from New York and taken up an interest in local folk art. Always attempt, furthermore, to convey this difference to students. Only by remembering this very special distinction will they understand the true nature of the folklore learning process.

Another type of volunteer presenter who is not necessarily a folk artist is a local professional or self-taught expert in some field who may be willing to talk on a folklore subject, or on a subject of interest to the study of folklore in the classroom. A lawyer or judge may know about folk methods of solving property ownership disputes in earlier times (such as who had the right to gather honey from a tree in the woods). A librarian or archivist could explain folklore sources in his or her book or manuscript collections. An avid genealogist could give a lesson on tracing folk roots through cemetery or manuscript records. A fireman might be willing to tell about the terms of communication used among his fellow workers, and the initiation rites of becoming a fireman.

The most useful volunteers, however, may not be the folk artists, performers, or lecturers that come to your class once or twice, but those people willing to help a class with an entire semester or year-long folklore project. Such volunteers could be called upon to help make contacts, drive students to various locations to collect information, donate materials or equipment and help students learn how to use them, or do background research for teachers. These volunteers may be retired persons, housewives, parents, or anyone willing and able to spend some time and energy with students on a project.

In many cases, this type of volunteer can be the key to a successful project. Most teachers have little or no time to devote to new projects. Many students need extra impetus to carry out special activities. Enthusiastic volunteers can help both students and teachers reach the goals of a project and create a lasting product.

Many local newspapers have weekly columns requesting volunteers for activities in the community. Potential helpers could be located by this means, or by contacting service organizations, local historical societies, senior citizen centers, voluntary action centers, or parent-teacher groups.

If you have never worked with volunteers before, a few words of advice:

- Be very clear about the duties they will perform and the number of hours they will need to devote to the work before requesting volunteers.
- Make sure the volunteers clearly understand the nature and goals of the project. One or more training sessions or informational meetings may be necessary.
- Carefully screen volunteers to make sure you are "hiring" the right person for the job. Evidence of specific skills, enthusiasm, and the ability to work with students should be assessed prior to hiring.
- Always plan some type of public recognition or other non-monetary service for the volunteers, during and especially upon the completion of a project. Volunteers are happy to give their time to a project they deem worthwhile, but they like to know that you have appreciated their efforts. This recognition could be as simple as a nicely-designed certificate of appreciation signed by the superintendent of schools in your district, and a free copy of any publications that resulted from the project.

Seeking Professional Help

If you are still confused about beginning a local folklore project, or if you have a big idea that goes beyond local resources (and may need outside funding), there are several places to turn.

For folk arts projects stressing the use of authentic folk artists in school settings, the **Indiana Arts Commission's Folk Arts Coordinator** is a great resource person. Information about ordering a brochure detailing the services of the Folk Arts Program is given at the end of this essay. The Coordinator can give you useful information concerning the Folk Artists in the Schools program, and help you apply for funding for projects.

Although not strictly a folklore organization, the **Indiana Historical Bureau** is in touch with many local organizations interested in folklore, and serves as a clearinghouse for local history projects, which often contain folklore studies. The Bureau also maintains contact with County Historians, officially designated as voluntary collectors and administrators of the history of their home counties. The Bureau can provide a list of the County Historians if you cannot otherwise locate yours.

The **Indiana Committee for the Humanities** has in the past provided funding for local folklore projects, but they have no staff person assigned directly to helping with an application for a folklore project. However, their staff is very helpful. The **Indiana Historical Society** can provide useful information about local historical resources. The Indiana Historical Society and the **Indiana Division, Indiana State Library,** may provide leads for oral history projects.

The **Division of Historic Preservation** has been mentioned previously. A private organization, **Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana,** also provides information about historic architecture and has regional offices with staff.

Indiana University, Bloomington, houses one of the four major academic folklore departments in the country that grant the Ph.D. in folklore. Recently, I.U.'s **Folklore Institute** has shown a growing interest in helping local organizations begin folklore projects. The Institute also maintains the **Folklore Archives,** a repository for information collected by I.U. folklore students, which includes county files containing folklore texts from many Indiana communities. You may wish to write, or even visit, the Archives to discover what has been collected from your county. The **Archives of Traditional Music,** also located at Indiana University, contains many spoken and musical collections from around Indiana as well.

Other universities offering folklore courses include I.U. Kokomo, I.U.P.U.I. (Indianapolis and Columbus), Purdue University, The University of Notre Dame, and Indiana State University, Terre Haute. Folklore professionals teaching these courses are usually willing to make themselves available to help local persons interested in folklore and, of course, welcome teachers to take their courses for credit or to officially audit courses. Contact the Indiana Arts Commission's Folk Arts Coordinator to find out details about these courses.

The **Hoosier Folklore Society** is a statewide service organization that provides a forum for all persons interested in folklore. The Society publishes a Newsletter, and plans activities such as tours and meetings to help people learn more about folklore. The **Indiana Oral History Round Table** provides workshops, publications, and human resources as well.

Last but not least, if your school has not yet organized a chapter of the Little Hoosier Historians and the Junior Historical Society, you should consider beginning one. These organizations can be very good springboards for folklore projects, and help sustain an interest in folklore and local history beyond the classroom.

Resource Institutions and Organizations

Division of Historic Preservation
202 North Alabama
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana
3402 Boulevard Place
Indianapolis, IN 46208

Indiana Historical Bureau
140 North Senate
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Indiana Historical Society
315 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Indiana Arts Commission
32 East Washington, 6th Floor
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Indiana Committee for the Humanities
3135 North Meridian
Indianapolis, IN 46208

Indiana Junior Historical Society
140 North Senate
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Indiana Folklore Institute
504 North Fess
Indiana University
Bloomington, IN 47405

Indiana Folklore Archives
510 North Fess
Indiana University
Bloomington, IN 47405

Archives of Traditional Music
057 Maxwell Hall
Indiana University
Bloomington, IN 47405

Hoosier Folklore Society
504 North Fess
Bloomington, IN 47405

Indiana Oral History Round Table
Indiana Division
Indiana State Library
140 North Senate
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Key Works

American Association for State and Local History Publications. AASLH, P.O. Box 40983, Nashville, TN 37204.

Teachers not familiar with this organization and its publications should send for the most recent catalog immediately! A wealth of books, pamphlets, and even slide-tape programs are available.

Building Bridges Between Schools and Communities: Using the Arts in Education. Contact Ann Timberman, Curriculum Division, Department of Education, Room 229, State House, Indianapolis, IN 46204.

Although this handbook focuses on the arts, its many suggestions for involving local communities in school projects are very pertinent to the use of folklore resources as well. Several sections involve folklore and local history study. There is also a section on planning. A copy of this handbook should be available at your public library.

"Folk Arts Program," a pamphlet available from the Indiana Arts Commission, 32 East Washington, 6th Floor, Indianapolis, IN 46204. (Contact Folk Arts Coordinator)

This multi-page pamphlet explains the Folk Arts Program, gives suggestions for projects, and lists helpful resources.

Folkpatterns Resources, an assortment of written materials available through the Michigan State University Bulletin Office, Central Services Building, East Lansing, Michigan 48824.

The Folkpatterns project began several years ago as a 4-H project, involving leaders and 4-Hers in collecting local folklore on many topics. The materials published by this project are highly recommended as models. Send for the publication "4-H Folkpatterns Resources" to receive a complete list of available materials.

Mid-South Humanities Project Workshop Manual. Inquire at the Center for Historic Preservation, Box 80, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN 37132.

The Mid-South Humanities Project, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, stressed the use of local resources in studying the humanities in the classroom. The *Manual* includes invaluable suggestions for using folklore and history resources, including many good exercises and bibliographies. Materials are now being produced through the state-funded Center.

Hufford, Mary. *A Tree Smells Like Peanut Butter: Folk Artists in a City School.* Available from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, 109 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08625.

Good documentation of a project by a professional folklorist in a city neighborhood. Helps urban-oriented teachers discover what they can use as local resources.

Weitzman, David. *My Backyard History Book.* Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1975. *Underfoot: An Everyday Guide to Exploring The American Past.* N.Y.: Scribner, 1976.

Two excellent guides to using local and family history, with much material for folklore projects. Both include practical suggestions for class projects, including forms and good bibliographical references.

11

Cultural Diversity and Folklore

Objectives

- Recognizing the differing folkways of foreign cultures, and sub-cultures within the United States;
- Identifying folk attitudes reflected in folklore, both within and outside of culture groups; and
- Using folklore to help come to terms with prejudice against and fear of non-mainstream groups.

Introduction

Inta Gale Carpenter in this essay addresses the way folklore can aid in understanding cultural diversity. The classroom often brings together a group reflecting differences in regional dialect, national heritage, racial heritage, and — in some areas — even different nationalities. Through an understanding of the folkways of these various groups, teachers can expand students' perceptions of the world outside their classroom and community. Conversely, by recognizing attitudes toward cultural differences reflected in folklore (such as ethnic jokes and rumors) concepts such as prejudice against and fear of those different from ourselves can be explained and discussed in the classroom.

Cultural Diversity and Folklore

Inta Gale Carpenter

Today, given the speed of communication and the ease of travel, the world's people are each other's neighbors. Unfortunately, many students, and perhaps teachers and parents as well, are largely unfamiliar with their cultural neighbors. A recent UNESCO education study of 30,000 ten- and fourteen-year-olds in nine countries ranked American students next to last in their comprehension of foreign cultures; another survey reported on their woeful sense of world geography. Even technological advances seem not to have helped us become better acquainted with those whose languages and styles of life are not like ours. For example, when General Motors put out its Chevrolet Nova, apparently no one thought of foreign sales, wrote Representative Paul Simon in his 1980 book *The Tongue-Tied American*. When spoken as two words in Spanish, Nova means, "It doesn't go." Not surprisingly, sales in Puerto Rico and Latin America were few until the name was hastily changed to "Caribe." Then the car sold well.

Ironically, folklore, which is a timeless means of communication that far predates technology and mass media, can help redress this ignorance. Folklorist Alan Dundes calls folklore an "autobiographical ethnography," or people's own description of themselves.[1] Folklore also is a sensitive barometer for areas of cultural misunderstanding and unproductive stereotyping.

The astonishing extent to which certain forms and themes of folklore appear throughout the world seems to suggest that there are some universals about human experience. Each society, for example, has rites that celebrate the major passages of life: birth, puberty, marriage, death. Nurturing parents sing lullabies and perform finger-plays for the pleasure of their infants. Growing children everywhere rediscover traditional games and songs (as well as dirty jokes). Each stage of human development brings about its own special interests, pleasures, tasks, and hence its shared experiences and appropriate folkloric expressions. Folklore itself is one of the universals of every society — no culture is without it.

Folklore is everywhere, but it is not the same everywhere. Inevitably, folklore displays a cultural context, for individuals perceive the world through cultural lenses and act in it from a particular social base. Each human group nurtures its own distinctive way of living, transmitting it over the generations through a variety of means, one of which is through folklore. Parents, teachers, and peers are the conveyors of folk knowledge, whether it be rhymes, songs, foodways, home remedies, traditional architectural designs, customs, etc. Individual variation of tradition is an important phenomenon to keep in mind and to explore, but for our purposes here, I will stress group conceptions.

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[1] Alan Dundes, "Folklore as a Mirror of Culture," *Elementary English* (April, 1969), 471.

Within certain limits, then, folklore can be viewed as a mirror of culture. It grows out of the things that are important to a people and is expressed in words, forms, and symbols infused with a particular group's values, attitudes, aesthetics, and cultural goals. In broad strokes it may be said that African cultures have evolved differently from American, while Asian countries contrast with both, recognizing all the while that within any country a still finer complexity of manners and ways exists.

A friend recently returned from eighteen months of study in China. I asked her what she appreciated most about America after her long absence. She replied: "Americans' honesty and directness. They'll tell you just what they think." As an example of the contrast between cultures, she gave the following account:

> When someone comes to visit me [in China], I ask them if they would care for tea. The reply usually is "Oh, no, thank you. I don't want to trouble you." "But it's no trouble," I reply. "Are you sure you won't have some?"
>
> After some moments of this sort of coaxing and polite hedging, my guest finally agrees to tea. So I make it. When I offer it to them, asking whether they would like cream or sugar, I hear, "Oh, any way you care to make it." It's then that I remember the straight "yes or no," "cream and/or sugar" replies of my American friends in similar situations. And I appreciate that.

When viewed from the perspective of the Chinese, this scenario might receive a different, equally cogent, explanation. Consider, for example, what Erving Goffman writes in *Interaction Ritual:* "The Chinese used to complain that the Westerner was brusque, boorish, and unmannered. In terms of Chinese standards, presumably, the conduct of a Westerner is so gauche [that he forces] the Asian to forgo any kind of direct reply in order to rush in with a remark that might rescue the Westerner from the compromising position in which he has placed himself."[2]

Folklore and culture may be important shaping forces for each other, but folk forms can be misleading. Folklore does not *equal* culture. Teachers should keep in mind that folk materials can sometimes be the reverse of cultural norms and can express action or imaginatively permit behavior that is not normally approved. It can be dangerous to leap to conclusions or indulge in over-simplifications about the meaning of folklore to the culture that produced it, all the more so if dealing with an unfamiliar or "exotic" land or group. Tongue twisters, for example, do not mean that obscene words are permissible in U.S. social situations — quite the contrary. They reinforce the very fact of the taboo. A slurring or "mistake" of "I slit a sheet; a sheet I slit; upon the slitted sheet I sit" easily results in the uttering of words an American child is not permitted to use. But this "accidental" misarticulation is accepted and probably greeted with laughter, even in a school situation, by adults who would be appalled to hear a child curse under different circumstances. Thus with proper contextual research, folklore can also provide information about cultural diversity that is outside of or contrary to "normal" social limits of a group of people.

The United States essentially consists of many communities with widely differing – yet co-existing — cultural perspectives. Anglo-Americans, for instance, live largely by the clock, parceling time into neat segments that point like a vector to the future. For them, punctuality is a virtue: "the early bird catches the worm"; "early to bed, early to rise." But among Native Americans, events happen "when the time is ripe" and not at some arbitrarily appointed hour. Barre Toelken in *The Dynamics of Folklore* recounts an example of the contrasting notions of time between Anglo-Americans and Navajos:

> I had lived with [a] Navajo family for several months before he politely asked me early one morning what kind of noise I was making on my wrist every day. I pointed out to him how the hands went around a dial that was marked off in equal sections. I then told him that by watching where the hands were I could determine what kinds of things I should be doing. "Like what?" he asked in Navajo. "Well, eating. It tells me when to eat." "Don't your people eat when they are hungry? We eat when we are hungry if there is food." "Well, yes, we eat when we are hungry; that is, no, we eat three times a day, and we are not supposed to eat in between times." "Why not?" "Well, it's not healthy." "Why is that?"And so on. . . . Finally, in exasperation, I said that the watch actually was my reference point to some larger ongoing process outdoors and this seemed to satisfy the old man. But later, when we were outside that afternoon, he stopped me and held me by the elbow and asked, "Where is it? That which is happening out here?" Beginning to be even more frustrated, I said, "Well, the sun comes up and goes down, doesn't it?" "Yes," he agreed expectantly. "Well, I guess I can't explain it to you. It's nothing, after all. It's all inside the watch. All it does is just go around and make noise." "I thought so," he said.[3]

American administrators and schoolteachers initially misunderstood this attitude of their Native American students toward time and thought their seeming nonchalance indicated a lazy and careless character. Today it is recognized instead as part of a unique world view different from that of mainstream Americans.

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[2] Erving Goffman, *Interaction Ritual* (New York, 1968), 17n, quoted in Roger D. Abrahams, "Black Talk and Black English," *The Florida FL Reporter* (Spring/Summer, 1969), n.p.

[3] Barre Toelken, *The Dynamics of Folklore* (Boston, 1979), 277-78.

Cultural variability can be threatening and overwhelming, and we all seek to create order out of the disorder of pluralistic ways. One way we have of coping is through stereotyping: we transmit ethnic slurs, tell jokes, and create images of other people. Consider the following two examples, one related to familiar ethnic jokes, the other to a complex of folklore genres and behaviors. The *Indiana Daily Student* of 28 February 1980 reported then-candidate Ronald Reagan's apology for a joke he told during the presidential campaign:

> "How do you tell the Polish one at a cock fight? He's the one with a duck.
>
> How do you tell the Italian one? He's the one who bets on the duck.
>
> How do you know the Mafia is there? The duck wins."

Reagan later apologized for the joke, explaining to reporters that he had told it strictly as an example of the type of joke he did not approve. This explanation did not negate the laughter that had followed his telling of the joke. Folklore research suggests that such disclaimers often precede or follow jokes we tell, as a means of indicating to our audience that "we" are not prejudiced even though we tell a seemingly disparaging joke. Such denials are not surprising, because in jokes we give vent to deep feelings and attitudes, anxieties and fears. Perceived differences worry us, and in stereotypic labeling, we eliminate uncertainty through pigeon-holing particular groups of people or types of behavior. Such pigeon-holing includes ideas about ourselves and "our people."

Many Americans, for example, have clung to the notion of unlimited good — America as the land of plenty and opportunity with no real limit on how much of any one commodity can be produced. This idea appears in many of our well-known phrases: "There's plenty more where that came from"; "The sky's the limit." U. S. politicians once promised "a chicken in every pot" and "two cars in every garage." Such phrases became less common as we came face-to-face with energy shortages, a recessive economy, and the effects of industrial and technological pollution. Today we're more likely to say "Split wood, not atoms," to give but one example of how folklore adjusts to newly perceived social realities and tasks. Indeed, some of the folklore generated about America's newest wave of immigrants — the Vietnamese — concentrates on their consumption of "our" goods and suggests that America is a place where there is no longer enough to go around. Rumors, anecdotes, jokes, and legends, grounded in Anglo perceptions of "strange" Vietnamese customs, eating habits, and mores may be summarized as follows: "They eat our pets. They take food out of jars and packages in supermarkets, leaving us short of our full share when we unsuspectingly buy the product. By using school tennis nets for fishing, they prevent our children from playing tennis." Behind these folk expressions lie both real and fanciful perceptions of how the Vietnamese are different from Anglo-Americans.[4]

It often comes as a surprise, on the other hand, that "we" may be the object of others' jokes or notions. In a teachers workshop on stereotyping, folklorist Roger Abrahams asked the white teachers in the audience, "Have you ever thought whether blacks stereotype you?"

> When you ask a specific white teacher this, they will inevitably come back with, "Well, I guess they do, but I never thought about it." "Well, you talk about how blacks smell so bad, did you ever consider whether blacks talked about your smell at all?" "Well, we don't know, I don't think so, anyhow." Then you point to a black teacher who you think might be willing to come forth with the information, and it always comes out just about the same way, "Well, yes, whites do smell different, kind of like dogs coming in out of the rain."[5]

Often, cultural differences are even more subtle than the obvious differences of race and nationality. The migration of southern families — particularly Kentuckians — to Indiana for better job opportunities in industrial areas is a good case in point. Since Indiana and Kentucky have been natural rivals throughout their histories (which can be evidenced by many historical as well as current "Kentucky jokes"), a very real feeling of "difference" is apparent. These differences are compounded by a southern accent, southern foodways, and other transplanted folkways of many Kentucky families. In industrialized areas of central and northern Indiana, the Kentucky "hillbilly" or "redneck" is often equated with backwardness, poverty, and clannish social behavior. Children from such families are often ridiculed by their "native Indiana" peers, echoing attitudes held by some of their elders. Keeping eyes and ears op[redacted] this sort of negative behavior, and discussing[redacted] with students, is one way teachers may help ease the pain of "differentness" for students from non-mainstream culture groups.

In summary, folklore helps us become aware of our ethnocentric biases. We look upon our way of doing things as "natural," and while we are willing to accept some deviation from a general pattern, we find any difference that is too pronounced strange and unsettling. Many classrooms are a microcosm of the general U. S. population, with students from diverse cultural, regional, racial, and religious backgrounds sitting side by side. None of these children come into the school *tabula rasa* (a blank tablet). They bring with them particular ways of speaking, of behaving, of viewing the world; they bring different sets of manners, respond to specific rules concerning such things as orderliness, social interaction, physical appearance, and so on. Often these differences generate stereotyping and misunderstanding, and those teachers who can help their students see that these differences need not imply either positive or negative value judgments serve their students well.

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[4] Florence E. Baer, " 'Give me . . . your huddled masses': Anti-Vietnamese Refugee Lore and the 'Image of Limited Good,' " *Western Folklore*, 51 (1982), 275-91.

[5] Roger D. Abrahams, "Folklore and Community Action — Educational System," *Folklore Forum*, Bibliographic and Special Series No. 8 (1971), 23-24.

Students and teachers who confront stereotypes head-on have an opportunity to examine and evaluate them in light of everyday experiences with individuals from the groups being stereotyped. As they come to recognize how everyone indulges in this labeling, stereotypes lose much of their mystique and their negative power, and students begin to ask themselves, "Is that really so?" when faced with examples of stereotypic thinking. Illustrating how folklore can be a key to understanding cultural diversity can be as simple as turning to the local newspaper. There, over a period of weeks, the teacher or the student will find references to different ways of doing and thinking.

Key Works

American Folklife Center. *A Report on the Chicago Ethnic Arts Project*. Washington, D.C.: American Folklife Center, January 1978.
This comprehensive report on a project carried out in ethnic neighborhoods of Chicago covers the many forms of ethnic folklore. Helpful references are listed by ethnic group. Available through the American Folklife Center, Washington, D. C. 20560.

Dorson, Richard M., ed. *Folktales Told Around the World*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975.
Field-recorded texts of tales, legends, anecdotes from 44 countries arranged to facilitate comparison of themes, styles, and narrators across cultures.

Dundes, Alan. "Folk Ideas as Units of World View," *Journal of American Folklore*, 84 (1971): 93-103.
Dundes demonstrates how certain ideas indicative of particular world views are expressed through folklore.

Indiana Folklore, Vol. X, No. 2 (1977). "Land of the Millrats: Folklore in the Calumet Region."
This special issue of the journal *Indiana Folklore* details the field research of a team from Indiana University in 1976, reporting on aspects of Latino, Eastern European, and black culture. Available through the Hoosier Folklore Society, 504 North Fess, Bloomington, IN 47405.

Smithsonian Institution. "Festival of American Folklife Program Books," (1969-1984). Available from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.
These colorful programs from the large annual festival celebrating American regional and ethnic heritage include concise essays on a variety of traditions, from Korean to cowboy. The photographs and line drawings are especially useful for younger students.

Toelken, Barre. *The Dynamics of Folklore*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979.
Includes useful chapters on "Community Taste" and "Folklore and Cultural Worldview," and is particularly strong in giving examples from Japanese and Navajo cultures.

Preparing a Resource Guide

Age: 6th grade and above

Objectives:

- serving the community by identifying folk artists and craftsmen
- learning more about the folk process of learning an art or craft
- appreciating local tradition bearers

Things needed: Resource Guide Form (see model), tape recorder, camera

Time: Ideally, a semester-long project

Instructions:

- Students should have a good understanding of folklore and its forms before beginning the project. The teacher should describe the process of identifying community resources by beginning with the familiar (i.e., family and close friends) and branching out.
- Students should fill out a Resource Guide Form for each resource collected. Students should be encouraged to interview and photograph the resource as well as merely collecting names and information about the resource's folklore talent.
- The teacher may wish to assign a certain number of resources to each student, or organize the class by interests (i.e., someone may be particularly interested in quilts, someone else in traditional recipes, someone else in Ukrainian Easter eggs and embroidery, etc.).
- At the end of the project, all properly filled out forms may be copied and bound as is, or retyped and printed. Copies should be made available to other classes and community resources such as the library, historical society, etc.

Suggested Model: *Michigan Folklife: A Resource Guide* (available through Michigan State University Bulletin Office, Central Services Building, East Lansing, MI 48824).

Documenting Folk Architecture

Age: 6th grade and above

Objectives:

- introducing students to historic preservation on the local level
- introduction to research, and exercise in close observation
- fostering appreciation for folk architecture

Things needed: camera or drawing apparatus, measuring devices, National Register of Historic Places blank forms (available from the Division of Historic Preservation, 202 North Alabama, Indianapolis, IN 46204; request any aids on filling out the form when writing to request a form)

Time: Several weeks. Dividing labor into small portions for each student may cut down on time.

Instructions:

- The teacher or community volunteer should identify house, barn, church, or other folk structure within access of the school and, ideally, previously undocumented, before the project begins. Permission should be obtained from owners, of course, before the structure is studied.
- The study of the structure should be clearly divided into steps, and each step assigned to a single student or group of students according to their interests and talents.

  Suggested steps:
  1. Documentation of structure itself
     a. measuring
     b. drawing elevations and floor plans
     c. describing construction details
     d. photographing whole and particular features of interest
  2. Interviewing present owners and/or builder, and previous owners
  3. Research of structure
     a. library research
     b. county records research (tax forms, etc.)
- The form from the National Register should be filled out to the best of students' abilities. If the structure merits listing, in your opinion, on the National Register, and if the form is complete, teacher and students may wish to submit the form for consideration for the National Register.

References: American Association for State and Local History Technical Leaflet No. 089, *The History of a House: How to Trace It;* Warren E. Roberts, "Fieldwork: Recording Material Culture," in Richard M. Dorson, ed., *Folklore and Folklife.*

Interviewing a Local Folk Artist

Age: 4th grade and above

Objectives:

- **fostering observation and journalistic skills**
- **learning about local folk arts**
- **recognizing the talent of local residents**

Things needed: writing implements, camera if available

Time: one or two hours, or the duration of a visit to class by a folk artist, plus time for students to compose notes into an "article"

Instructions:

- Following suggestions listed in the text of the preceding essay, the teacher or community volunteer should locate one or more local folk artists and invite them to perform/demonstrate in class. For example, a woodcarver or fiddler may be invited.
- Before the folk artist comes to class, students should be "briefed" on what they will be viewing, and asked to develop their own list of five questions to ask the artist. These questions may be discussed in class. Creative questions should be encouraged.
- The teacher may wish to assign reading from one of the *Foxfire* series of books, or gather some journalistic pieces done by local newspapers on folk artists to serve as models for articles.
- When the folk artist visits, each student should get a chance to ask several questions, and be encouraged to observe the artist, take notes on whatever the artist says, sketch or photograph the artist, etc.

Note: The teacher may need to organize these interviews in some way so that chaos does not ensue. The artist will probably wish to give a general presentation before students begin asking questions. Students may be divided into small groups, each with a time to ask questions, to avoid a bombardment of questions all at once.

- Each student must write a short piece on the folk artist and his/her work. The best pieces might be published in the school newspaper, or even the local town newspaper, or gathered together to form a "book."

Exploring Folk Art in a Local Museum

Age: 4th grade and above (may be simplified for younger students)

Objectives:

- to realize the potential of folk art study in the local museum
- to heighten powers of concentration and foster research techniques
- to appreciate local heritage

Things needed: catalogue form (see model; teacher may wish to modify slightly), camera if available, tape measures and rulers

Time: One or more visits of approximately two hours duration to local museum (figure in travel time). Students may be encouraged to return to the museum on their own time.

Instructions:

- This exercise requires the teacher, or community volunteer, to visit the museum prior to the student visit and identify a number of folk art/craft items. Quilts, coverlets, handmade tools, handmade clothing, local pottery, and woodcarvings are some possibilities.
- Depending on the size of the class, teachers should pick as many items as necessary. Students may work in teams of two or three. Teacher may assign students an artifact or allow them to pick their own.
- Each team should concentrate on only one artifact. Students should fill out a catalogue form for the artifact, measure, describe, sketch or photograph it, and find out as much as they can about it from information available at the museum.
- After returning to school, students should be given time to research the artifact further through a combination of library research and interviewing older individuals, collectors of similar items, etc.
- The teacher should also encourage students to think creatively about the artifact. Who do they imagine having used it, where, and when?
- Each student team, after thorough research, should deliver an oral and/or written report on its artifact. Any information gathered about artifacts should be turned over to the museum for its records.
- With the museum's permission, a small exhibit of artifacts involved might be staged at school. As an alternative, a bulletin board with pictures of artifacts may be organized, with labels, summarizing the research of the students.

References: American Association for State and Local History Technical Leaflets No. 011, *Documenting Collections: Museum Registration and Records*, and No. 021, *Methods of Research for the Amateur Historian.*

Resource Guide Form

Name of collector:

Date collected:

Name of Resource:

Address:

Phone: (home)
(office)

Reference (who told you about this resource?):

Describe the folk art, craft, or other folklore information the resource possesses:

Age of resource:

Would resource be willing to demonstrate/talk/perform folklore talent

_______ at school
_______ at his/her home or shop for a group?

Was resource interviewed and/or photographed?

_______yes _______no

If yes, list number(s) of tapes and photographs:

Would resource mind students visiting him/her at home for an interview?

_______yes _______no

Other information about resource:

Folk Art Catalogue Form

1. Name of cataloguer

2. Date of cataloguing

3. Name of folk art object

4. Number of object (if previously catalogued)

5. Age of object

6. Source of object, if known:

7. Condition of object (list any major worn areas, areas in need of repair, or missing sections):

8. Description of object (include measurements, colors, materials used in construction, etc.)

9. Describe use of object (in household, on farm, in manufacturing, as decoration, etc):

10. Other remarks:

11. Draw and/or attach copy of photograph of the object here:

Whose Celebration Is Right?

Age: 5th grade and up

Objectives:

- to teach the concept of varying cultural norms
- to encourage tolerance of other ways of doing things from our own

Instructions:

Students could easily exchange contrasting versions of how particular festive occasions are observed in their own families.

Teachers might then ask, "Which version is correct?" Such a query should trigger a prolonged debate, with individuals championing one way over another.

Gradually, the discussants will come to realize that in folk tradition — as in life — there is often no right version. One family's way of observing Christmas — or Chanukah or Ramadan — is as traditional, or "normal," as another.

Through such an exercise, students learn first-hand about the narrow-mindedness of ethnocentrism and have an opportunity to contemplate the notion of tolerance across cultural boundaries. Another's ways are not "wrong," but "alternative." They are equally traditional and coherent given a particular belief system and world view.

Cross-Cultural Humor

Age: junior and senior high

Objectives:

- to compare what makes people laugh in different cultures
- to explore the themes in humor of different culture groups
- to discuss prejudice as voiced in humor depicting various racial and ethnic groups

Instructions:

If your classroom contains a number of students from different regions, racial groups, or countries, ask each to tell a favorite joke. After a number have been exchanged, discuss with students why (and *if*) different examples were humorous.

Sometimes it is possible to elicit versions of the same theme from a number of different cultures and discuss the reasons for the contrasting emphases, styles, etc. Students may be surprised to find that what someone from Africa finds humorous will make no sense, let alone prompt laughter, to someone from New England, and so on.

If the class situation lends itself, it might be instructive to ask for samples of racist jokes, in order to put on the table for discussion the "butts of humor" in various countries and to discuss the traits of the characters and groups in the jokes. There will be differences, but also surprising similarities. Such an exercise should be approached with caution, however, since there could be misunderstanding. It would be advisable to prepare parents and school administration with an explanation of what is being done and why in advance.

If the classroom does not contain a variety of ethnic and racial groups, but the teacher is still interested in exploring the themes suggested by this exercise, a study of popular joke books containing ethnic or racial jokes could be made. These books are readily available at bookstores or news stands.

Cultural Variety in Costuming

Age: can be adapted to any age group

Objectives:

- **to recognize diversity through various dress and hairstyles**
- **to explore the cultural implications of costuming**
- **to link present day and historical costumes in this concept**

Instructions:

A discussion (including illustrations, if possible) of the aesthetics of personal beauty might prove to be a dramatic way to illustrate the relativity of values and styles across cultural boundaries.

No one is taught in school "how to look," and yet we all know what is acceptable to the majority in our societies. (Why else do beats, hippies, and punks choose such dramatically contrasting styles?)

This exercise facilitates a historical perspective as well, i.e., men in powdered wigs, women in tight corsets, young boys with long curls and lacy clothing in western society of some centuries back.

A bulletin board, scrapbook, or even slide show using illustrations from magazines, newspapers, picture books, and photographs could be devised as a final product.

APPENDICES

EDITOR'S NOTE: In this article, originally published in the November, 1982, issue of the Indiana History Bulletin, Betty Belanus, former folk arts coordinator for the Indiana Arts Commission, defines folk art and presents a practical method of identifying it in the local community.

The article is reprinted in this workbook as a supplement to the introductory chapter defining folklore as an alternative means of identifying the materials of folklore and to further clarify the term "folk art."

IDENTIFYING FOLK ART IN YOUR COMMUNITY

By Betty J. Belanus

As State Folk Arts Coordinator for the Indiana Arts Commission, I am constantly explaining the finer points of folk art to interested persons. Many county organizations—historical societies, museums, arts councils, schools, libraries and clubs—have expressed a desire to start a folk art project, but many are still confused as to the "true" definition of folk art. Many more might become interested in starting such projects if they understood the scope of the folk arts. Therefore, this article is meant as a brief introduction to identifying folk art in your community.

In general, the folk arts are those arts which have been passed on over periods of time within a specific region or ethnic group. These arts have enjoyed a continuous line of tradition—they are not arts that have been revived from traditions long past the memories of living community members. One learns a folk art from a fellow family or community member, and the local community judges the artistic merit of the folk art. Some examples of folk arts are storytelling; traditional music and dance; cooking; needlework; wood, metal and stone work; farming practices; religious decoration; hunting, fishing and trapping.

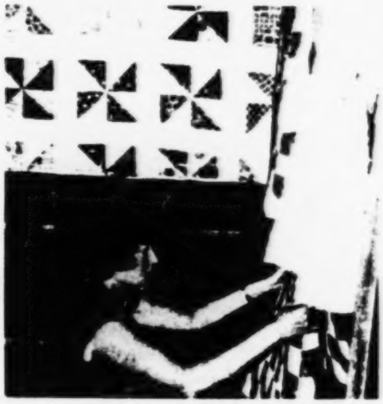
The folk arts are one branch of what may be called "folklore," "folklife," or "folk culture": the traditional oral and material life of a region or group. The folk arts are that branch of folklore that involves artistic expression. It may be argued that all folklore involves artistic expression; in fact, some scholars define folklore in general as "a traditional performance." This is not the place to argue about terms and definitions. Our definition of the folk arts, therefore, will be "those aspects of traditional life that involve artistic expression."

In beginning to truly understand what the folk arts are, it is useful to think of folk art in terms of the following five characteristics:

1. the item of practice should be traditional;
2. it should be learned by word of mouth or by observation or imitation;
3. it should display a quality of conservatism (that is, to some extent it always stays the same);

Ed Gibson, traditional fiddler, competing at the Forks of Wabash Festival, Huntington. (Photo courtesy Jean Gernand)

4. at the same time, it should display dynamism, or be found in many variations;
5. it should appear to be anonymous (that is, hard to trace to any inventor or author).



Laurie Sommers, folklorist, hangs quilts for a show at the New Harmony opera house, featuring over 60 old and new quilts from Posey County quilters. (Photo by Betty Belanus)

1. Tradition

We must first examine the concept of "tradition." Some believe that to be "traditional," an item or practice must be at least fifty years old—and if it is one or two hundred years old, all the better. The concept of tradition, however, has more subtle meanings. For an item or practice to be traditional, it must be passed down over time. The length of time, as well as the distance the item or practice travels, varies greatly. For instance, a new joke or rumor may pass through a school or office in a few hours, and soon spread to homes, neighboring communities, and all around the state in a matter of days. On the other hand, an older, more complex operation like rugweaving or Greek dancing may take years to learn and may not spread outside a relatively small group. There are no year limits on the forming of a tradition, nor are "older" traditions any more legitimate than "newer" traditions.

Many communities or groups, of course, choose to center their folk arts projects around older citizens since they feel that the older individuals have much to tell about their lives and art before they pass away. This concentration (which some folklore scholars have jokingly called the "quick before it melts" concept) is undoubtedly well meaning and valuable. Unfortunately, it tends to foster the feeling that "newer" traditions, or those traditions carried on by younger persons, are not as valuable, which, of course, is simply not true.

The "quick before it melts" concept often involves working from the memory of by-gone days. This is a fine concept for the oral historian, but not totally satisfactory for the modern folk art researcher. Ideally, to be properly researched, a folk art must be observed as it is performed. Therefore, for example, the folk art researcher should try to visit a basketmaker to find out how he makes baskets rather than merely hear someone tell how his grandfather made baskets. Consequently, perhaps communities should turn their attention equally to the children playing traditional games on the playground, to the teenagers swapping horror legends, and to the middle age couples at a square dance, as well as to the senior citizens reminiscing. The time has come to give "newer" traditions a fair chance, while they are still alive and being performed.

2. Learning Process

A large part of identifying a folk art involves discovering how that art was learned. The true folk art is learned by word of mouth or by observation or imitation. Take, for instance, the process of learning how to cook a family recipe. You watch your mother fix the dish dozens, maybe hundreds of times. When you are old enough, she allows you to help with the preparations. Gradually, you learn to do it "right." Learning a recipe from a cookbook can't compare with the experience of learning a recipe from the family expert!

Sometimes, the folk art learning experience is more formal, as in the case of a blacksmith or weaver's apprentice. However, most often the folk art is more or less "picked up" by someone who has a natural talent for it. Folk musicians and woodcarvers, for example, will often tell you that they heard or saw someone playing a tune or whittling out a chain, then they took out their banjos or pen knives and copied the other fellow. This process happens naturally within the community or group.

Recently, a great revival of interest in the folk arts has caused some confusion over what is truly traditional. "Folk art" courses are taught in home economics groups and "folk dancing" at YMCAs. People learn to make "traditional" corn husk dolls from craft books. The adjective "folk" is applied to anything from Joan Baez records to pre-packaged wall stencils.

The best test of whether something is "really" folk is in how it was learned. And, to reiterate, a true folk art must be learned within a community or group by word of mouth or by observation or imitation. No amount of book learning or instruction by someone who did not themselves learn the "folk art" in the traditional manner can legitimize something as a true folk art.

This hard and fast rule has at least one hitch. I am often asked whether someone who comes into Indiana from another area—say, a college student from Massachusetts—and learns to play the fiddle or card wool from a true folk artist can then be called a folk artist in his or her own right. I usually answer in the negative, because someone from outside with a sincere desire to learn a tradition from another area creates an artificial learning experience. In other words, the art is not passed on as it usually would be within the community or group. These people are to be commended for their desire to learn and carry on a tradition; however, they should not be referred to as "folk artists."

3. Conservatism and 4. Dynamism

At first glance, these two characteristics seem to contradict each other. With explanation, however, they seem natural and complementary. Let's take, for example, the traditional quilt pattern called "log cabin." A dozen log cabin quilts could be laid out side by side, and all would be seen to display the distinctive pattern of rectangular strips pieced into squares; this proves the conservatism or recognizable nature of the pattern. On the other hand, it is highly unlikely that any two log cabin quilts would be exactly alike. There would be differences in the size of the squares, color combinations, and stitching patterns. This proves the dynamism, or variation, existing in the folk arts.

The same two characteristics can be seen in traditional cooking, singing, storytelling, and the whole range of folk arts. The subtle pattern of similarity and variation is one thing that makes folk art so fascinating. Without a recognizable similarity, a folk art would cease to exist—but without changes a folk art would stagnate and eventually die.

The aspect of change often confuses those not familiar with the characteristics of folk art. Sometimes, a radical change in how something is made or what language is used causes people to believe traditionality is at question. For instance, can a quilt pieced on a sewing machine be "just as folk" as one pieced by hand? Can a tall tale about an automobile be "just as folk" as one about a horse-drawn wagon? The answer is yes, providing the quilter or tall tale teller learned his or her art in a traditional manner. Changes are often caused by modernization, but modern methods do not necessarily kill the folk arts.

The confusion stems from the idea that anything "old" must be "folk." This misconception ties in with the previously mentioned "quick before it melts" idea. In reality, there are scores of examples of things that are old that are not folk, and things that are very modern that are folk. Each case must be individually examined for "folkness" or "non-folkness." Everything "old" may have historical value, but that does not automatically make it worthy of study by the folk art researcher.

Gene Adamczyk demonstrates Ukrainian Easter egg decorating at the Festival of Eastern European Traditions, Dunes National Lakeshore Park. (Photo by Betty Belanus)

5. Anonymity

Lastly, the folk arts appear to be anonymous, without a specific author or inventor. Who can say who first sang *Barbara Allen* or who first decided to make a quilt? We may be able to pin down a tradition to a certain era or area, but exact pinpointing is usually impossible.

Once again, this rule does not apply only to items with origins in the remote past. For instance, who can trace the modern legends of the "worms in the hamburgers" or "rats in the fried chicken" to an individual?

Sometimes, an item of folk art such as a song can be traced to an individual author. However, after enough people have learned the song from each other by means of the folk learning process, the song will begin to take on variations in wording and tune never intended by the original author. The song, or other item, is then said to have crossed into the public domain, and it becomes an item of folk art.

Conclusion

In identifying folk art, it is helpful to consider the five characteristics outlined above. Of course these characteristics are not rigid: we may find an item of folk art that does not fit all five of them. For instance, some folk speech items such as the proverbs retain exact wording. Some folk poetry can definitely be traced to its author. Some folk singers have learned songs in their repertoires from the radio or records. However, in all of these examples the performer or item to be performed displays aspects of traditionality and lives up to most of the other characteristics.

The last important thing to remember about folk art is that it is art that reflects the taste of the community or group. The performer of folk art understands what is expected artistically from him or her by the local people. A country fiddler is not expected to play Beethoven at a Saturday night dance, nor is a folk painter expected to produce a picture in the style of Picasso. An Italian cook is not expected to serve biscuits and gravy at a traditional Italian meal, nor is an Amish needleworker expected to incorporate African-inspired designs into her quilt. The art of the folk artist is local art, appealing to the members of the community he or she is a part of. It just so happens that this art often appeals to those outside the community or group as well!

Folk art can be found anywhere, in rural areas as well as urban and suburban areas. It is found among farmers, fishermen, ethnic groups, children of all ages, men at bars, women at club meetings, religious groups, college students—you name it. Once your eyes are open to the nature of true folk art, you begin to see examples everywhere.

My appeal to each person reading this article is that you begin looking for local folk art and folk artists in your area. Folk art could be staring you in the face; folk artists could be people you have known all of your life. After you have identified the folk art resources of your area, consider beginning a project to preserve and honor these arts. Such a project will be a very meaningful and rewarding one, instilling community members with new pride and interest in the heritage of their area.

William Carter shows children in a Lawrence County school how he carves wood. (Photo by Elaine Lawless)

Appendix 2
Indiana Folklore - A Selected Bibliography

Indiana Folklore — A Selected Bibliography

Compiled by Xenia E. Cord

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Appendix 3
So, You Want to Preserve History? Some Things You Should Know

So, You Want to Preserve History? Some Things You Should Know

Christine Young

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THE LONGEVITY OF ARTIFACTS

When we record and gather the materials of history we do so in the belief that they have an enduring value not only for ourselves but for future generations. It is, therefore, important to consider the preservation of these materials.

Two factors determine how long any object will last: how it is made and how it is treated afterwards. In generating new documents or in compiling old, the materials used will establish the potential lifetime of the artifact: some types of materials will last for many decades despite abuse, while others will last no more than one decade even with gentle care. The materials and the environment which surround the object have an enormous effect on aging. An excellent environment can dramatically extend the longevity of even poorly fabricated objects. Conversely, a poor environment can accelerate the deterioration of any object. Careful attention to the fabrication and later situation of the artifact will insure that the object will survive to its maximum potential.

The types of artifacts which will be discussed here are those on paper base — sketches, documents, manuscripts, newspaper clippings, and photographs. Adhesives, inks, mounting boards, and the like will also be examined since they are intimately associated with the artifacts and therefore will affect their aging.

The things which cause paper and photographic artifacts to deteriorate are numerous. A variety of chemicals cause deterioration: oxidants such as peroxide or ozone, acids and acid-forming vapors such as sulfur and nitrogen compounds, and even water. These chemicals may be present in the air, in adhesives and inks, in the cardboards and papers used for boxes and mounting boards, or inside the object itself. Furthermore, these chemicals are able to transfer or migrate from one object to another. This means that a good and healthy paper can absorb deteriorating chemicals from adjacent materials of lesser quality. The choice of adhesives, album pages, mounting boards, and storage boxes may spell the difference between life and death for the artifact. When generating new documents, such as transcribing oral histories, the choice of papers and inks will determine the limits of preservation.

The environmental conditions — light, temperature, and humidity — are critical factors in the aging and deterioration of paper and photographic artifacts. High levels of light, temperature, and moisture accelerate and energize the chemical reactions of deterioration; light and heat also cause deterioration by the direct breaking of the paper's internal structure. A second type of damage caused by high humidity (moisture) is biological deterioration; mold and many types of insects require high humidities to live and propagate.

CHOOSING MATERIALS FOR LONGEVITY

Papers

The physical structure of paper is extremely simple: a sheet of paper is little more than a mat or felt of tangled fibers. These fibers are derived almost exclusively from plants; the primary constituent of papermaking fibers is cellulose. Depending upon the purpose of the paper, dyes, pigments, adhesives and other materials may be added; the proportion of additives is very small relative to the quantity of cellulose fiber.

The specific origin of the fibers and the additives to the pulp play major roles in determining how long a paper may or may not last.

Paper Pulps

Rag: Rag pulps consist of linen and, now more commonly cotton fibers. These fibers are very pure forms of cellulose, and they are very strong. Rag papers have the greatest potential for longevity.

Prior to 1840, nearly all European and American papers were made from rag pulp. Today, all-rag pulps are used only for some artist's papers and for "museum" matboard. Some stationery papers are made from partial rag pulps.

In most cases, the use of all-rag paper will give the best potential for longevity.

Chemical Wood Pulp: The vast majority of papers are now made from wood pulp. In the pulping process, the various resins in the wood are dissolved out, releasing the individual wood fibers. Depending on the type of wood used and the specific pulping process, these paper pulps can be of very good quality or very poor quality.

There is no hard and fast rule for determing the relative quality of these papers. Generally, however, if one knows the intended purpose of the paper, the potential for stability can be roughly estimated. Wrapping paper, intended to be used once then thrown away, can be projected to be of poor stability. Better stationery papers, especially those with some rag content, could be expected to last a few decades at least.

The demand for relatively inexpensive and stable papers has risen dramatically over the past decade. As a result, a number of manufacturers are now producing wood pulp papers of exceptionally high quality. Some of these papers have been "buffered" to a high pH; this buffering increases the longevity of the paper dramatically. Buffered papers are recommended for use when generating new documents.

Suppliers of rag papers and boards and of high quality wood-pulp papers, matboards, and cardboards are listed in Appendix B.

Ground Wood: An inexpensive pulp utilizes wood which has been ground apart. Also called lignified pulp, ground wood contains all the resins and organic acids found in the living tree. Because of these impurities, papers containing ground wood pulp are self-destructive; virtually nothing can be done for their long term preservation.

Ground wood pulp has such poor physical characteristics that it must be mixed with another type of pulp to even form paper. Ground wood pulps are routinely used in newsprint and cardboards, both solid sheet and corrugated. Nearly all readily obtainable matboards and posterboards contain ground wood pulps.

Ground wood paper products should never be used for the production of artifacts, nor should they be used in conjunction with older artifacts. Newspaper clippings which are considered significant should be duplicated onto a more stable material; photocopying onto a buffered paper is recommended.

Non-Wood, Non-Rag Pulps: Paper making fibers can be derived from a wide variety of plants. Most common are jute and manila. These papers tend to be quite unstable, and their use is not recommended.

Japanese, or "Rice" Paper: although these papers are commonly known as "rice papers" the fibers of the rice plant have never been used in papermaking. By and large the majority of papers are made with the fibers from kozo, the inner bark of the paper mulberry. A variety of "exotic" fibers, such as pineapple, may be added to these pulps, but they are rarely a major component of the paper.

Oriental papers are distinguished from Western papers by their exceedingly long fibers. The greater fiber length makes the Oriental papers relatively stronger and more flexible than Western papers of the same weight. They require less sizing, less filling, and generally less bleaching. As a class, Oriental papers are considered more stable than Western papers and they can be expected to last longer.

Papermaking

The basic principles of papermaking were established in the first century A.D. and have changed little since. Making a sheet of paper is relatively simple in theory: paper fibers, mixed into water, are caught on a screen; the fibers mat together as the water drops through the screen; the matted fibers are taken from the screen and dried.

A wide variety of machines have been introduced through the centuries to make this process more efficient and less expensive. The machine which has had the single greatest impact on the physical properties of paper is the Fourdrinier; in fact, it is the use of this machine which distinguishes a machine-made paper from a hand-made paper.

In the hand-making process, a person dips the screen into a vat of pulp and lifts it upward to catch the fibers. The screen is tilted in all directions as the water drains. The result is that the fibers are oriented randomly throughout the finished paper. The physical properties of the paper are the same in all directions.

In the mechanized process, the hand-held screen is replaced by a conveyor-driven continuous web (the Fourdrinier). The pulp drops onto the web from an overhead hopper. Because the screen moves continuously in a single direction during the draining stage, the paper fibers become aligned. As a result, the physical properties of the paper differ according to direction, and the paper is said to have grain.

When working with a machine-made paper, it is important to identify the grain direction. The paper is stronger and more resistant to tearing across the grain; it is more flexible along the grain. As paper absorbs moisture from air, paints or adhesives, it will swell more across the grain than along the grain. To prevent permanent rippling when joining several papers, the sheets must be joined with their grains in alignment.

Distinguishing Between Hand-Made and Machine-Made Papers

Hand-made and machine-made papers vary greatly in their properties. Hand-made papers are relatively free of grain, while machine-made papers always have grain. Generally, the pulp content will differ according to manufacture. It is rare for a hand-made paper to contain wood-pulp; the Western papers are usually all-rag. Conversely, nearly all machine-made papers contain one or more wood — pulps. Because of these differences, it is worthwhile to distinguish the type of manufacture. There are several methods of examination and analysis which are both useful and simple.

Pulp Type: if the type of pulp is known, then one can usually be correct in assuming that wood-pulp papers are machine-made and that all-rag papers are hand-made.

Dates: for very old items, the date can be useful. The Fourdrinier was invented in 1804; therefore all earlier papers are hand-made. Papers dating prior to 1830 are most probably hand-made.

Physical Appearance in Normal Light: if the paper has one or more irregular, thin and feathery edges (deckled), it is hand-made.

Physical Appearance in Transmitted Light: transmitted light permits the distribution of fibers to be seen, and it is very useful in the identification of paper.

The majority of hand-made papers are cast on screens made with closely packed, straight wires; this produces a "laid" pattern in the paper which appears as many closely spaced lines with a few perpendicular lines set at wide intervals. Watermarks, decorative designs peculiar to the manufacturer or consumer, are a hallmark of hand-made papers. These are produced by additional wires tied onto the screen; the wires inhibit the congregation of fibers during draining, thus causing the thinning of the paper and an interruption of the screen pattern.

The straight wires used for hand-held screens are too inflexible to be adapted to the belt-type screen. The Fourdrinier utilizes a woven screen similar in configuration to window screening. Viewed in transmitted light, the paper will show a "wove" pattern.

The dandy roll was an early addition to papermaking machines. The dandy roll is a metal roller with wires welded on the surface in patterns which mock "laid lines" and watermarks; these patterns are impressed upon the damp paper as it leaves the Fourdrinier. The purpose of dandy rolling is to make machine-made paper appear hand-made; the confusion which results is both predictable and intentional. Dandy rolled paper can be identified by careful examination of the thin design portions of the paper. The dandy roll design is impressed upon an already formed sheet — the wove texture remains apparent inside the areas of design. By contrast, the patterns in hand-made papers are made by wires which prohibit the accumulation of fibers during the formation of the sheet; there is no underlying texture in the thin design portions of the hand-made sheet.

Paper Additives

Sizing: Dilute adhesives are added to most papers to reduce their absorbency and, to a lesser degree, improve their strength. Traditionally, these sizing agents were starches and gelatins. Since the nineteenth century, the most common sizing for all paper types has been alum-rosin; in time, moisture in the air combines with alum-rosin to create sulfuric acid.

When purchasing paper for long-term purposes, avoid those which use alum-rosin sizing; gelatin is still available.

Fillers: Fillers are non-pulp additives designed to alter the characteristics of the paper. Some are added to increase the weight or "body" of a paper, others to alter color. Calcium carbonate is added to paper as a buffer; over time this filler helps to neutralize acids in the paper and the environment.

Coatings: For certain applications, one or both paper surfaces may be coated with another substance. Coatings range from wax and plastic, for food purposes to pigments and clays for aesthetic purposes. The most readily identifiable coatings contain clay; these include posterboards in addition to glossy magazines and pages for color illustration. The clays used tend to be alkaline and therefore serve as buffers, increasing somewhat the longevity of the paper; unfortunately most coated papers are of such poor quality pulp that even the coating cannot stabilize them for long periods.

Adhesives

Self-stick and pressure sensitive materials: Pressure sensitive adhesives used for cellophane tapes, masking tape, strapping tape, stickers, and labels are extremely complex formulations; the primary component of most of these adhesives is synthetic rubber. In addition, they contain many other chemicals which are damaging to paper and photographs over long periods of time. These adhesives cause paper to become very brown and brittle; they may cause fading of photographs within just a few years. The impurities in these adhesives are powerful enough to migrate through thick papers and to damage adjacent artifacts. Self-sticking materials should never be used on anything which is intended to last.

Cements: Cement-type adhesives, such as contact cement or rubber cement, contain free sulfurs and other compounds which are damaging to paper and photographic artifacts. Like pressure-sensitive adhesives, they will make paper brown and brittle and they will cause photographs to fade. They should never be used on or near artifacts of value.

Glues: Traditional glues are made from boiling down animal products or parts. These adhesives are far too acidic to be used when permanence is desired. More modern glues, such as "white glue," are combinations of solvent-based resins and water. These are somewhat safer than natural glues, but are still not safe enough to be used directly on an important artifact. White glues are good enough to be used on adjacent materials, and they are fine for the construction of folders, boxes, etc.

Gums: Gum adhesives are purified tree extracts. Most gums appear to be quite safe for paper and photographic artifacts. Gum adhesives are commonly found on postage stamps, envelopes, fabric and paper backed tapes, and some labels. Gums require wetting in order to be adhesive.

Pastes: Traditional pastes are made from vegetable starches such as rice and wheat. Starch pastes have been used for centuries and are proven to be very stable and safe for both papers and photographs. They are the preferred adhesives for conservation and other preservation purposes.

Methyl cellulose is a synthetic paste which is extremely easy to make and use. While it has not yet stood the test of time, methyl cellulose appears to have aging properties similar to starch pastes. At the present time, it too can be recommended.

No other type of synthetic paste has passed thorough testing for stability. The only pastes recommended are cooked starches and methyl cellulose.

Non-adhesive Systems of Attachment

Metal Closures: Metal closures come in a variety of forms, including paper clips, staples, clasps, and tab pins. These objects do corrode and rust in time, causing permanent stains in the papers and photographs which they contact. Under no circumstances should these items be used on or near artifacts of value.

Rubber Bands: The rubber used in the manufacture of rubber bands has been vulcanized; as a result there is a great deal of free sulfur associated with the rubber. These sulfurs cause the direct embrittlement of paper and fading of photographs; they also combine with moisture in the air to form acidic vapors. Rubber bands are detrimental to the longevity of artifacts, and they should not be used on or near significant items.

Writing Materials

"Felt Tips": The liquid ink used in marking pens of all dimensions is very prone to fading. In addition, many are water soluble. In conditions of high humidity or accidental wetting, the ink may bleed and even transfer to adjacent artifacts, resulting in permanent staining. The potential for bleeding and the tendency for fading are good reasons to discourage the use of these pens both with older artifacts and for the generation of new documents.

"Ball Points": Ball point inks are extremely complex formulations. The chemicals used to make these inks are chosen for color, flow, and drying properties, and not for stability. These inks are known to transfer from one artifact to another; some also stain paper and fade photographs. Their use is to be discouraged when preservation is important.

Liquid Inks: Liquid inks vary a great deal in their formulations and properties. Most colored inks are prone to fading. The majority of these inks are water soluble and may cause the types of problems mentioned previously for felt tips.

India inks are extremely permanent; they are non-fading and non-water soluble. For generating new documents, their use is highly recommended. Because they are so permanent, India inks should not be used to mark on older artifacts.

Type-Writing: Typewriter ribbons are colored with black carbon pigment; as such they are inherently stable to light and do not fade. There is some variation, however, in the materials used to bind the pigments together. As a class they can be considered more stable than most inks, but probably less stable than India ink or graphite.

Graphite: Normal pencils produce one of the most stable types of imaging and writing possible. Graphite is carbon, which is completely inert. It does not fade, nor does it interact chemically with paper or photographic artifacts. Graphite is the only material recommended for the labeling or identification of artifacts. The type of pencil recommended is No. 2 — it is hard enough to prevent smearing, but not so hard as to require a lot of pressure to make a clear image.

PHOTOGRAPHY

While there are hundreds of different types of photographic processes, the number of processes commonly used are very few.

Nineteenth Century

The greatest variety of photographic processes occurred in the nineteenth century.

- The oldest photographic types are daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, and tintypes. These photographs are on sheets of metal or glass and are photographic positives. Nearly all daguerreotypes and ambrotypes, plus some tintypes, were placed in small miniature cases for handling, storage, and display; the major key to the preservation of these photographs is to keep them in their cases.
- The single most common type of print on paper from the nineteenth century is the albumen print. In this process, the image is contained in a layer of egg white. Typically albumen prints age badly: the highlights yellow, the shadows fade to khaki, and the surface cracks or crizzles. Because albumen prints are on very thin paper, they are almost always mounted to a cardboard card. The cards offer a great deal of protection, and it is important that they be preserved with the print.

Twentieth Century

Nearly all photographs produced in the twentieth century have a coating of gelatin which carries the image; negatives, prints, and transparencies, regardless of whether black and white or color, use gelatin for emulsion layers. Gelatin is fairly stable, and gelatin prints which are properly processed and stored can be extremely permanent. The greatest single problem with gelatin emulsions is the tendency for gelatin to absorb water from the air and environment; moist gelatin is extremely sticky, and a damp gelatin photograph can easily adhere to glass, plastic, or paper.

Recently, manufacturers have introduced resin-coated, or RC, papers for black and white prints. The plastic which coats the paper helps to reduce processing time, and thus the paper is very popular with photo labs. Experience has shown, however, that this plastic is prone to cracking and yellowing. In generating new black and white prints, it is important to avoid RC papers.

Preservation and Care

As a general class, photographs are more susceptible to damage and deterioration than most any other material. Because they are so sensitive, a great deal of care is required for their preservation. Even simple attempts at cleaning or repair may damage a photograph. In this respect, the less done, the better.

Nearly all black and white photographs have images made of very tiny silver particles. Silver is stable to light, but is susceptible to tarnish from chemicals and pollution. The tarnished silver changes in color from black to the brownish tones associated with fading.

Fading can be prevented by good initial processing of the photograph and by careful subsequent handling. Because of the silver's small size, photographs are hyper-sensitive to impurities. The only materials which are safe to use on or near photographs are those which have neutral pH and which emit no sulphur vapors or peroxides. Common plastics, cardboards, and papers are all damaging; most adhesives, particularly rubberized products, are damaging. The only safe adhesives for photographs are cellulose pastes and gums. Only un-buffered ragboard, neutral pH lignin-free paper and cardboard, and the best plastics are recommended for storage, mounting, or framing.

A Warning about Color

To date there has not been an economical and readily available color film with good stability. This is true for negatives, prints, and slide transparencies from all manufacturers. Under normal household conditions, the color dyes begin to fade within a few years. Photographic dyes are so notoriously unstable that they are known to fade in the dark, without exposure to light. This unique distinction makes color photographs almost impossible to preserve without investing in a system of low humidity, refrigerated storage. For short-term care, color photographs should be kept in the dark and as cold and DRY as possible.

The simplest solution when generating new photographic keepsakes is to avoid color processes altogether, and to use only black and white materials.

CREATING SITUATIONS FOR PRESERVATION

Environment

The environment, in the broadest sense of the word, is the key to the preservation of existing artifacts. Papers and photographs must be shielded from those agents which cause or accelerate deterioration: pollution, heat, moisture, light, insects and other malicious creatures.

Excessive heat and light are perhaps the most damaging, followed by excessive humidity. As much as possible, shield artifacts from light by placing them in opaque enclosures. If an object is brought out for viewing, it should be promptly put away when done. The more an item is exposed to light, the more important it is that light levels be subdued and that sunlight and fluorescent light be excluded from the area. Nothing of significance should ever be framed and hung on the wall for extended periods of time. Permanent exhibition of paper and photographic items spells certain death.

Heat affects objects in a number of ways. First, heat accelerates the chemical reactions which cause deterioration; as in cryogenics, the cooler an artifact is kept, the longer it will last. Temperatures also affect the physical size of an artifact. Materials expand as they warm up and contract as they cool. Cycling of temperatures between warm and cold creates tremendous physical stress within objects and may cause fragile pieces to disintegrate.

High levels of water in the air, expressed as humidity, are also destructive to paper and photographic artifacts. Water is a necessary component in many of the reactions which cause deterioration; restricting the amount of water in the air will inhibit chemical deterioration. Molds and fungi are activated by moisture. Keeping the relative humidity below 60% will make molds and fungi dormant, thereby preventing their growth and spread and halting their damage. Finally, porous objects expand at high humidity as they absorb moisture and contract at low humidity.

When chosing a storage location, it is important to look for an area which has fairly consistent levels of humidity and temperature and which is not prone to frequent or extreme cycling. Temperature and humidity should be as low as possible without sacrificing stability. The absolute worst places for storage are attics, basements and garages. Ideally the locations chosen for storage and display should be at the interior of the building, away from outside walls and away from heating and cooling vents.

The objects and materials adjacent to an item constitute its immediate environment. Picture frames, envelopes, boxes, plastic bags, and wooden drawers are commonly used to enclose artifacts. Because of their proximity to the artifacts, these objects have tremendous impact on aging. Impurities contained in wood, poor paper pulp, and plasticized plastics are known to vaporize out; these polluting vapors then attack the artifacts. The closer an artifact is to the source of the vapors, the greater the damage. By the same token, vapors from a poor quality artifact will migrate to other artifacts. A newspaper clipping enclosed inside a letter on good stationery paper will cause the letter to become brown and brittle; a poorly processed photograph can fade the photographs next to it.

Storage of significant artifacts for long-term preservation relies on the basic idea of protection. Selection of a proper storage site will protect the artifact from excessive heat, humidity and light. Opaque, high quality storage enclosures protect the artifact from light and many environmental impurities such as dust, dirt, and even some insects and environmental pollutants. Use of individualized sleeves, envelopes or folders protects artifacts from each other.

Materials for Storage and Display

Papers and Cardboards

Buffered, lignin-free materials are best for the storage of paper artifacts and other objects of vegetable origin. Envelopes, folders, boxes, matboards, bristol boards, tissue paper and stationery paper are among the many items available in buffered form.

Unbuffered, lignin-free materials are best for the storage of photographs, parchments and other artifacts of animal origin; the pH of these storage materials should be in the range 6.5-7.5. Boxes, sleeves and matboard are currently available. A growing variety of these storage materials is coming on the market.

Plastics

Plastic sleeves are advantageous for storage because the artifact can be viewed without removing the protective covering. If plastic enclosures are chosen for storage, remember that they do not protect against light and that an additional, opaque, enclosure is necessary. The greatest single problem with using plastic enclosures is the fact that plastics represent a great diversity of materials which have vastly different stability. Identification of the specific plastic used can be difficult and the choice is critical for the artifact.

Most common plastics are very rigid and somewhat brittle by nature. To be used successfully for sleeves, folders and the like, they must be made softer and more flexible. This is accomplished by the addition of oily, lubricating chemicals known as plasticizers; even camphor may be used as a plasticizer. Plasticizers are mixed into the plastic but are not bound to it. In time, they will escape and either form an oily film on the plastic's surface or vaporize into the air (this is the source of the "new car" smell). Once the plasticizers have gone, the plastic becomes brittle again. When plastics are used near artifacts there is a greater concern: the plasticizers cause oxidation, embrittling paper and fading photographs.

The plastics which are recommended for use with artifacts are those which have the desired properties inherently and require little or no modification. Polyester, polypropylene and polyethylene fall in this category. Polyester is by far the most stable plastic; it is available as a film in sheet or roll. The DuPont trademark for polyester film is Mylar. Polypropylene and polyethylene are far more flexible and elastic than polyester; polypropylene is softer and has more "body" than polyethylene. Acrylic is a broad class of rigid plastics which may be used for storage boxes and similar containers; plexiglas, lucite and lexan may be considered to be in this class.

Common plastics of moderate quality include polystyrene and cellulose triacetate. Polystyrene is a much utilized, rigid plastic, frequently advertised as being "high impact" plastic. Triacetate is a flexible film containing some plasticizers; it is the plastic portion of most amateur photo films.

The plastics which require the greatest modification are by far the least stable. The most common flexible plastics of this class are vinyls and acetates. These plastics yellow, shrink and crack with age. It may be possible to smell or feel the plasticizers when the plastic is new. In addition to releasing plasticizers, vinyls may also release chlorides which act as bleach on the artifact.

It is impossible to describe plastics sufficiently to serve as an accurate guide to identification. The best procedure is to become familiar with the appearance and feel of identified samples.

Storage sleeves, bags, photo pages and the like are marketed in many different types of plastics. Most of the readily available ones are made of vinyl and should be avoided. Do not be fooled by claims of "virgin" vinyl — vinyl is vinyl. Generally the plastics used in archival quality storage materials are specifically identified by the manufacturer. Therefore, a good guideline for the purchase of plastics is to avoid any which are not well-identified as being a specific and stable type.

Methods of Presentation

Some of the worst damages to artifacts occur due to framing. The frame and all its contents form a tight micro-environment for the artifact. To protect the artifact everything in the frame, including backing boards and brads, must be of archival quality. Specific considerations and guidelines for matting and framing are found in Appendices G-H. Remember that frames do not offer protection from light, and that long-term display will result in significant damage to the artifact.

Scrapbooks and Albums

Scrapbooks and photo albums combine artifacts with papers, cardboards, adhesives, inks and often plastics. While they can provide excellent physical protection to the artifacts, the number of potential pitfalls is enormous.

Very few commercially available scrapbooks and albums are made with thoughts of permanence or preservation. Most use papers and cardboards of mediocre quality; some even contain ground wood pulp. Those which incorporate transparent pockets or sleeves commonly contain plastics which are inherently unstable. "Magnetic" pages are coated with pressure sensitive adhesives like those discussed earlier. In short, it is almost impossible to purchase a scrapbook or album which is not detrimental to the preservation of paper and photographic artifacts.

If one is compelled to purchase a ready-made volume, it is important to chose one which is free of adhesives, uses only good quality plastic (polyester, polypropylene or polyethylene), and uses papers which are free of ground wood.

Safe albums can be produced easily from scratch using neutral papers or inert plastics for pages, India ink on the page or graphite on the artifact for labeling, and pastes or gums for adhesives. A few companies are now producing archival albums and scrapbooks that utilize proper materials; these come with polyester photo corners for mounting the artifacts. Mounting techniques may include direct attachment with paste, hinges, or archival photo corners (Appendices G and H). Remember that the artifacts should not come into contact with each other — make the pages one-sided and do not overlap the items.

Specific systems of display and storage must be tailor-made for the artifacts in question, and they need to take into account patterns of use, available resources and space. If one pays attention to the materials being used and bears in mind the artifact's need for protection, then proper decisions for preservation will follow.

RELATIVE STABILITY OF MATERIALS

	POOR STABILITY	MODERATE/VARIABLE	EXCELLENT STABILITY
PAPERS			
pulps	ground wood* (lignified)	chemical wood	rag** purified chemical** most oriental papers
sizings	alum-rosin		gelatin
ADHESIVES & CLOSURES	pressure-sensitive natural glues cements metal closures rubber bands	"white" glues	gums cooked starch pastes methyl cellulose paste
WRITING MATERIALS	felt tips ball points	liquid inks type-writing	India inks — new documents graphite
PLASTICS	all vinyls (poly vinyl chlorides)	polystyrene and others	polyester (mylar) polyethylene polypropylene acrylics (lucite, plexiglas)

* ground wood pulps are common in: matboards, cardboards, posterboards, newsprint

** rag and purified chemical pulp papers are best purchased from manufacturers. See the supplier's list for sources

GLOSSARY

Acid
A water based liquid in which hydrogen ions outnumber hydroxide ions. Acids fall between 0 and 6.9 on the pH scale (see pH).

Acid-Free
Term used by manufacturers and distributors of archival products. While acid-free technically denotes both neutral and alkaline materials, in practice acid-free materials are usually buffered and alkaline (see buffer, pH).

Alkali
A water based liquid in which hydroxide ions outnumber hydrogen ions. Alkalis fall between 7.1 and 14 on the pH scale (see pH).

Archival Quality
Term used to describe materials which have an inherently good potential for longevity. Archival quality implies the absence of deteriorating agents (lignin, acids, sulfurs, chlorides, etc.) and good physical stability.

Artifact
An object which has inherent historic, artistic or informational value.

Buffer, Buffer Reserve
A buffer is a chemical which maintains a specific pH over a period of time. Buffers, usually calcium carbonate, are added to archival paper products to keep them at an alkaline pH. Eventually the acids in adjacent materials and in the environment will overcome the capacity of the buffer causing it to become exhausted and ineffective. Buffer reserve refers to the amount of buffering chemical which has been added to a product.

As much of the deterioration common to paper can be attributed to acidity, the addition of an alkaline buffer is considered beneficial in reducing the effects of acid. The use of buffered materials for the storage and display of older paper items and for the generation of new documents can be recommended. Buffered materials are not recommended for use with photographs, vellum or parchment.

The pH of buffered materials should be checked from time to time to insure that the buffer is still viable (see pH).

Dandy Roll
In the mechanized papermaking process, the wet paper passes from the Fourdrinier's casting web to a series of rollers for drying. Added designs or textures can be impressed upon the paper by use of a patterned roller at the outset of the drying process. This patterned roller is called the dandy roll, and papers treated in this manner are described as dandy rolled. The most common dandy rolled designs are watermarks and laid patterns.

Grain
Grain is a word used to describe a material whose physical properties differ according to direction; this phenomenon is known to woodworkers as grain and cross-grain, to seamstresses as warp and weft. In paper, grain is the result of the fibers becoming aligned during sheet formation on the conveyor web of the Fourdrinier machine. Flexibility, tear resistance and expansion/contraction occur in different degrees along the grain and across the grain. Machine-made papers are characterized by the presence of grain; hand-made papers are characterized by the absence of grain — physical properties are the same in all directions throughout the sheet.

Laid Pattern
A pattern commonly seen in hand-made papers either by transmitted (back) light or strong side lighting. The laid pattern can be likened to a ladder: there are many closely spaced lines in one direction, with a few intersecting lines in the other. The pattern is the result of water draining from the papermaking mold: the water which carries the paper fibers flows out between the wires, causing more fibers to be deposited between the wires than on the wires. True laid patterns occur only in hand-made papers (see Dandy Roll).

Lignin-Free
A term used by distributors of archival quality papers and cardboards to signify that the product is free of ground-wood pulps.

Micro-Environment
The micro-environment is the space within a closed unit, such as display case, storage box or picture frame. In examining the quality of the micro-environment, one must consider the materials which make up the enclosure and all materials inside the enclosure as well as temperature, humidity, light and environmental pollutants. Because of their sealed nature, micro-environments may be effective in protecting an artifact from the perils of the normal environment; conversely, if the micro-environment is poorly constructed it will concentrate damaging elements inside and thus accelerate damage to the artifact.

pH
pH is the scale used to measure the balance of hydrogen (H+) and hydroxide (OH—) ions in water (H2O); the scale reads between 0 and 14. When H+ and OH—

ions are present in the same quantity, the reading on the pH scale is at the midpoint 7, and the liquid is considered neutral. When H+ outnumbers OH—, the reading is below 7, and the liquid is acidic. When the OH— outnumbers the H+, the reading is above 7, and the liquid is alkaline.

acid   neutral   alkali
0— — -- — — — — — — — — — —7— — — — — — — — — — —14
more H+   H+ and OH— same   more OH—

It is important to realize that the pH scale is logarithmic rather than arithmetic. Each unit on the scale represents a change in the number of ions by a factor of 10. Therefore, a liquid at pH 5 has 100 times more H+ than a liquid at pH 7; a liquid at pH 10 has 1000 times more OH— than a liquid at pH 7.

The second important thing to bear in mind is that pH is a measure of the number of ions in water, and water must be present for a material to be acidic or alkaline. Many papers and adhesives are said to be alkaline, acidic or neutral. The pH of these materials can only be determined by wetting them up, then measuring the pH of the water; the pH of dry materials cannot be measured directly.

Plastic
Any material which can be molded or modelled; pliability, impressionability, and elasticity are implied characteristics. Materials which are commonly known as plastics are made from a variety of synthetic resins.

Polyester
The highest quality of plastic film currently available. Extremely stable and pure. Non-elastic and stiff. Major tradenames are Mylar (DuPont) and Estar (Kodak).

Polyethylene
A high quality plastic film of moderate elasticity and stiffness.

Polypropylene
A high quality plastic film of high elasticity and flexibility.

Preservation
The process of keeping something from decay and damage. The purpose of preservation is to maintain the object in its current condition. Unlike restoration, preservation relies on preventative measures: removing those things which are known to cause or accelerate deterioration.

Pulp
Fibers which have been fully prepared for papermaking but which have not yet been cast into sheets. Bleaching, dying and sizing are frequently done at the pulp stage.

Sizing
Dilute adhesive added to the paper pulp or applied to the finished sheet. The size fills the small gaps between paper fibers, thus reducng the porosity and absorbency of the paper. Traditional sizes were gelatin and starch. The most common size of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is alum-rosin.

Triacetate
Cellulose triacetate is a plastic film of moderate quality. Good flexibility, moderate elasticity.

Vinyl
Extremely poor quality plastic film, containing high levels of plasticizers. Emits both plasticizers and free chlorides.

Vulcanization
A chemical treatment of crude rubber which results in improved strength, hardness and elasticity; virtually all rubber products have been vulcanized. The vulcanization process uses sulfur and sulfur compounds; in time these sulfurs are released from the rubber and become atmospheric pollutants. Pollutant sulfur can attack paper and photographs directly, or it may combine with moisture in the air to form sulfuric and sulfurous acids.

Watermark
The watermark is a design element within the structure of the paper itself. Watermarks are areas of low fiber density caused by the addition of wires to the papermaking mold; the watermark design is made apparent by the difference in opacity between high density and low density areas of fibers. Watermarks usually identify the paper maker or paper consumer; they may be purely decorative in function or they may even indicate the pulp type of the paper (see Dandy Roll).

Wove Pattern
In transmitted (back) light, most papers will show a screen texture or pattern. In appearance, this pattern is intermediate between fabric and window screen textures. The pattern is the result of the paper being formed on a "woven" screen. All machine-made papers have this pattern; Hand-made "wove" papers do exist, but they are relatively rare.

APPENDIX A

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR CONSERVATION

All of these books are available directly from their publishers; some may be found in museum bookstores. Designed to encourage the proper care of artifacts by non-conservators, these books are written in a straight-forward, non-technical manner, and they are reasonably priced.

Clapp, Anne F. *Curatorial Care of Works of Art on Paper.* 3rd edition, revised. Oberlin, Ohio: Intermuseum Conservation Association, 1978

Written by one of the most respected conservators in the country, this is the best general book on caring for paper materials. Excellent discussion of paper aging and causes of deterioration. Covers matting, framing, and storage as well as some remedial restoration treatments.

Finch, Karen, and Greta Putnam. *Caring for Textiles.* London: The Textile Conservation Centre, 1975; 2nd edition, New York, 1977

Very good practical reference guide for the preservation of textiles. Includes information on display, storage, guides for proper cleaning, handling, and approach to conservative vs. restorative techniques. Includes illustrated case studies.

Keck, Caroline K. *A Handbook on the Care of Paintings.* Nashville, TN: AASLH, 1965

Written by a "founder" of conservation in the U.S., this remains one of the best sources for information on the manufacture, aging and care of paintings for the layperson. Covers cleaning, framing, display, and storage of paintings on canvas and panel.

Mailand, Harold F. *Considerations for the Care of Textiles and Costumes: A Handbook for the Non-specialist.* Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1978

This pamphlet gives good information on the care of textiles for the nonspecialist. Outlines the conditions for proper storage, care and display. Very good illustrations.

Weinstein, Robert A., and Larry Booth. *Collection, Use and Care of Historical Photographs.* Nashville, TN: AASLH, 1977

One of the few comprehensive books for the identification and care of older photographs. While there are some inconsistencies, the book is far superior to most of the genre.

APPENDIX B

CONSERVATION SUPPLY HOUSES

Aiko's Art Materials Import
714 North Wabash Ave.
Chicago, IL 60611
Japanese papers, some tools.

Andrews/Nelson/Whitehead
31-10 48th Ave.
Long Island City, NY 60611
Acid free papers, matboard; hand-made European and Oriental papers; artist's supplies.

Conservation Materials, Ltd.
Box 2884
340 Freeport Blvd.
Sparks, NV 89431
Excellent general conservation supply house; also all University Products line; very good people to work with.

Conservation Resources Intl.
1111 N. Royal St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
Acid-free and neutral papers, boards, storage containers. Some photo-specific storage items. General supplies.

Dolphin Papers
624 E. Walnut St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
High quality Western and Oriental papers.

Light Impressions
P. O. Box 3012
Rochester, NY 14614
Supplies specific for photographs plus some general materials; archival albums and scrapbooks; excellent service. Good for literature. Toll-free number.

Museum Shop, State Museum
202 North Alabama St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Wide variety of archival storage materials; most books on the bibliography; assorted supplies.

Photofile
2000 Lewis Ave.
Zion, IL 60099
Plastic storage enclosures for photographs and negatives in a variety of formats.

Print File, Inc.
Box 100
Schenectady, NY 12304
Plastic storage enclosures for negatives and photographs in a variety of formats.

Process Materials Corp.
329 Veterans Blvd.
Carlstadt, NJ 07072
Excellent supply house/manufacturer of papers for conservation, both buffered and netural. Also storage boxes and some more general supplies.

Solar-Screen Co.
53-11 105th St.
Corona, NY 11368
Ultraviolet filtering tubes for fluorescent lights; UV filtering films.

University Products, Inc.
P.O. Box 101
Holyoke, MA 01040
Acid-free papers, storage containers and boards; general supplies.

APPENDIX C

ADHESIVES

An ideal adhesive for use on valuable papers should:

1. Retain bonding properties sufficient for the particular use.
2. Remain acid-free.
3. Be no more subject to discoloration than the paper itself.
4. Be no more subject to mold or insect attack than the paper.
5. Remain readily soluble in its original solvent (water soluble adhesives being preferred far above all others).
6. Have a reasonably long shelf life.
7. Be easy to prepare.

Unfortunately there is, at least as far as the writer knows, no single package adhesive that meets all of these specifications. Unmodified proprietary materials fall especially short:

a. Many commercial pastes and synthetic emulsion glues are acid and tend to darken and become brittle with time.

b. Pressure-sensitive tapes should never be used in direct contact with papers of value. They are not designed for archival purposes and many can be actually destructive, communicating discoloration and causing brittleness. The adhesive of even the most long-lasting of these tapes hardens and becomes difficult to remove.

c. Gummed paper tapes, like the stamp-hinge variety, are not recommended for mounting tabs. The adhesive is neither strong enough nor enduring, and the paper is usually acidic glassine, a material that becomes brittle and weak.

Formulas for three adhesives are given in the following paragraphs. All of them have their drawbacks. Yet if the curator keeps on hand the materials with which to make them, and if he has the persistence to use them within the suggested limits, his principal needs should be successfully met.

Wheat-Starch Paste

This adhesive is smooth, strong and white and retains its tack even when diluted to a thin consistency. It is safe to use for any purpose involving direct application to papers of value. It is thoroughly time tested, having been used by generations of Oriental mounters and for many years having been a favorite among paper conservators. Because it has withstood the test of actual time, it is suggested as the only adhesive which should be used if it is to become an integral part of the paper support, as in the mending of edge tears.

Its faults are that it requires time and care to make and to prepare for use. Also it has a fairly short shelf life and must be discarded the moment it shows signs of spoiling. These factors are not troublesome to the shop in which the making of paste is a daily routine, but they can become a bother to the curator who may require an adhesive only at odd intervals.

Wheat Starch*	30 gm. or 12 1/2 t.
Distilled or Filtered Tap Water	200 ml. or 7 fl. oz.
Thymol solution in denatured alcohol	9 or 10 drops

> *Some conservators use rice starch or the flour of wheat or rice. But the first has been found to be somewhat less stable than wheat starch. The other two introduce unnecessary ingredients, and sometimes have had particles which do not soften in the cooking.

Put the water in the upper part of a double boiler and, before cooking, soak the starch in it for about half an hour with occasional stirring, until the starch is thoroughly saturated. Cook over slowly boiling water with constant stirring for 30 minutes. The material will become thick and opalescent. It will go through a very stiff stage, then, toward the end of the cook, will become less stiff and easier to stir. At the end of the cook, add the drops of thymol solution; remove the lower part of the double boiler and cook with rapid stirring directly on the hot plate for about 2 minutes. Put in a storage jar which, together with its lid, has been wiped with a swab dipped in the thymol solution. Keep in a dark, cool place.

To prepare for use, break down an amount of the storage paste sufficient for the need by pressing it with a spoon or spatula through a strainer. Repeat the straining once or twice. The strainer can be a circular Japanese sieve or, for a small quantity of paste, a piece of synthetic screening held over the paste dish. Dilute it with distilled or filtered water or, if a neutral paste is desired, with a mixture of water and magnesium bicarbonate water. The resulting paste then should test by pH indicator tape to be slightly alkaline. The amount of dilution, best judged by experience, depends upon the thickness of the paper and its reaction to the aqueous adhesive. For most uses, however, this strong paste, which could pucker the paper if used too thickly, should be diluted to a fairly thin, cream-like consistency, such that it will form slow, small drops from a tipped spoon.

The Mix[7]

Often a stronger adhesive than standard paste is needed in the forming of special mattings and framings. The Mix could be excellent for such purposes. It is a mixture of Methyl Cellulose Paste and polyvinyl acetate emulsion, specifically Jade No. 403, the synthetic white glue found to be most reliable. It is more plastic, maneuverable and slower setting than the white glue itself. Its strength depends upon the amount of PVA emulsion incorporated in the mixture. An astonishingly small amount is required for a strong adhesive. A recommended mixture is:

Jade No. 403	1 part
Methyl Cellulose Paste*	10 parts

*Methyl Cellulose Paste Powder, No. 6[8]
7 gm. or 3 t.
Distilled or Filtered Tap Water
235 ml. or 8 fl. oz.

Stir the powder into the water. After 20 or 30 minutes stir again very thoroughly. Put into a sterilized storage jar.

Caution: This adhesive should not be used in direct contact with a paper of value because it is slightly acid and is not soluble in water alone. It swells and softens in water, but for complete removal toluene is also required.

Paste for Mounting Photographs

Wheat Starch	40 gm. or 20 t.
Distilled or Filtered Tap Water	300 ml. or 10 fl. oz.
Thymol in denatured alcohol	9 or 10 drops
Methyl Cellulose Paste*	amount prepared below

*Methyl Cellulose Paste Powder, No. 6
10 gm. or 5 t.
Distilled Water 40 gm. or 1 fl. oz.

Stir the powder into the water. After 20 or 30 minutes, stir again very thoroughly.

Mix the starch in the water and place in a dark bottle. Refrigerate for 1 week. Decant the water and replace it with fresh. Cook over vigorously boiling water on high heat for one-half hour with constant stirring. The paste should be like taffy at the end of the cook.

Allow to cool and add the thymol-alcohol drops. When the paste is totally cool, add the methyl cellulose paste. Mix them together in a blender. The paste should be smooth and fluffy.

This section on adhesives is copied from *Curatorial Care of Works of Art on Paper* written by Anne F. Clapp (revised 1978), Intermuseum Laboratory, Oberlin, Ohio. Reprinted with permission of the author.

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[7] For an assessment of this adhesive and others used with paper, see the valuable articles by N. S. Baer, N. Indictor and W. H. Phelan, "An Evaluation of Adhesives for Use in Paper Conservation" and "Shelf Life of Commercial Poly(Vinyl Acetate) Emulsions for Use in Paper Conservation," *Guild of Book Workers Journal*, Separate from Vol. X, No. 1 (Fall 1971).

[8] Methyl Cellulose Paste Powder can be obtained from TALAS. [Methyl Cellulose Paste Powder is available from several of the supply houses listed in Appendix B.]

APPENDIX D

DRY CLEANING OF PAPER ARTIFACTS

ARTIFACTS WHICH MAY BE CLEANED:

Dry cleaning is recommended for "plain" paper items which are two-dimensional. Photographs, pastel, chalk, charcoal or pencil drawings should never be cleaned by erasure as permanent damage to the image may result. Caution should be used when cleaning over any image, as some types of inks may be picked up by the eraser.

Exceedingly fragile or damaged items should not be dry cleaned except by a professional conservator.

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

Powdered Eraser: This product is available under many trade names, the most common of which is Opaline. It is marketed in fabric bags or small cannisters; if purchased in bag, ignore the manufacturer's directions for use.

BRUSHES: Drafting brush for large and sturdy items; broad watercolor brushes for small or delicate pieces.

PROCEDURE FOR PAPER IN GOOD CONDITION:

1. Lay the flat paper object on a smooth, clean work surface.
2. Shake a fair quantity of eraser onto the object from the cannister or bag (twisting the bag helps).
3. With clean fingertips, roll the crumbs over the surface of the paper in a circular pattern. WORK IN SMALL AREAS
4. The eraser crumbs should darken as they pick up soil. Once the eraser is dirty, brush it off of the object. For heavily soiled areas, it may be necessary to repeat the procedure several times using clean eraser. Work until the eraser does not darken.
5. After the general surface dirt is removed with powdered eraser, a larger eraser, such as gum eraser, may be used to further reduce specific damages like errant pencil marks. Using this type of eraser prior to generalized cleaning should be avoided, as permanent streaking may result.

Always check the color of used eraser crumbs, especially when cleaning over design areas — soil will usually appear light grey. All other colors are suspect and may indicate that cleaning is causing damage to the image.

PROCEDURE FOR FRAGILE PAPER:

Weak or brittle paper must be carefully restrained to prevent movement and crumpling. Hold the paper down with one hand, keeping the thumb and index finger outstretched and open. Clean in the small area between these fingers, using a very gentle circular motion.

Torn paper must be cleaned in such a way as not to snag or otherwise aggravate existing damages. Clean each side of the tear individually, working carefully up to, but not over, the tear.

APPENDIX E

HUMIDIFICATION AND FLATTENING OF PAPER ARTIFACTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

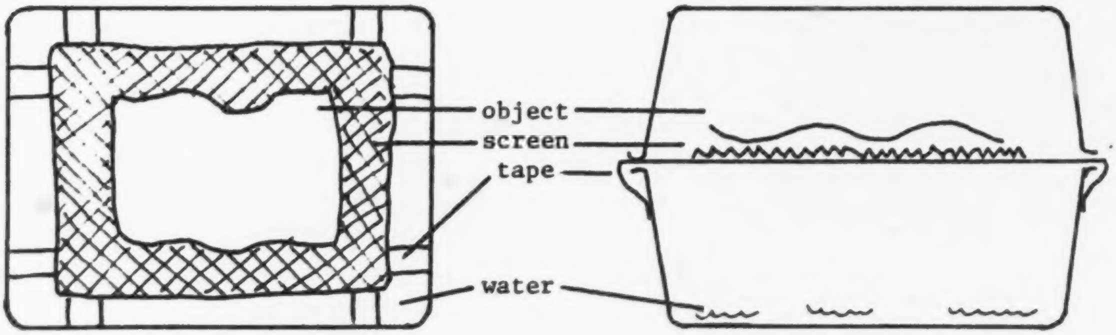
Most paper artifacts and photographs which are out of plane can be successfully flattened by humidification. The system described works best for items which are rolled or cockled (rippled); humidification prior to unfolding a brittle paper will help prevent breaking at the folds, but may not be a strong enough treatment to completely flatten the paper.

Humidification involves exposing the object to an atmosphere of high humidity. It does not involve direct application of water, water vapor or steam. Rather, airborne water is slowly absorbed into the paper fibers. Because the surface of the paper is never made wet, humidification is safe for water sensitive inks, paints and dyes as well as sensitive photographic emulsions; it will not "set" dirt and therefore can be done prior to cleaning severely distorted objects. Because the object is flattened with weight under blotters following humidification, the procedure is not recommended for objects which have a soft or transferable design medium, such as pastel or charcoal.

Humidification

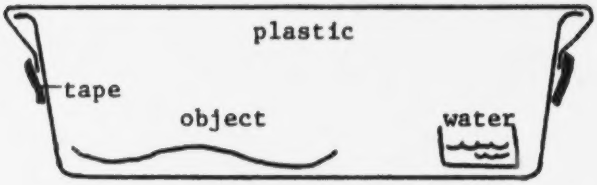
A chamber is constructed for humidification. This chamber should be reasonably air tight and should be large enough to accommodate small dishes of water as well as the object. The distorted size of the object and the projected size of the object after relaxation of distortion should be considered when choosing the chamber. There are two basic chamber designs.

Double tray: Two shallow trays of identical size form the chamber. The bottom tray is placed on a flat surface. A wide grid of masking tape is stretched over the top — usually two strips in each direction are sufficient. Water is poured into the bottom of the tray. It does not take much water: ½ cup for a 20" x 24" tray is enough. A piece of fiberglas window screen is then placed on top of the tape. The object is set on the screen; do not attempt to straighten the object out before setting it into the chamber. Double check to see that the piece is adequately supported; if the screen wants to sag or drop, place additional strips of masking tape below. Invert the second tray over the first. Cover any gaps between the edges of the two trays with tape.

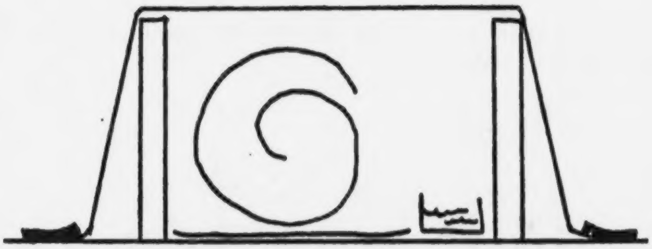


Single Tray: The single tray set up is advantageous when two like-size trays cannot be found, or when the object is very large. It is, however, riskier than the double tray method.

With this system, the object to be flattened and the water rest side by side in the bottom of one tray. Shallow containers such as small bowls or tunafish tins are used to hold the water. The tray must be large enough to allow several inches between the object and the water. After everything is in place, stretch a sheet of utility plastic (clear permits viewing) over the tray and seal the edges of the plastic to the work surface or the outside of the tray with masking tape. Place enough tension on the plastic to keep it suspended well above the object and water.



For very large pieces, or objects in a large roll, an oversized chamber can be constructed using the principles of the single tray chamber. Simply build four sides with wood and set it on the work table; this frame need not be pretty, but must be reasonably sturdy. Use the work surface like the bottom of the tray; before introducing the object and the water line the bottom of the chamber with a sheet of plastic.



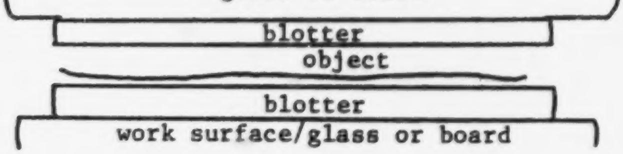
Gauging the Degree of Humidification: The type of paper, its thickness and general condition, and the severity of the distortion are all factors in the rate at which the paper absorbs moisture and the amount of moisture required to relax the paper and make it flexible. A thin paper in poor condition will generally require little humidification; a rolled photograph will require lengthy humidification.

Humidification is designed to be a gradual and non-stressful process; patience is required. Most objects will be adequately humidified in six to twelve hours. Under no circumstances should any object be humidified more than 24 hours, as there is an increasing risk of mold activity. As a general rule, leave the object in the chamber undisturbed for the first six hours before checking its condition; thereafter examine it at two hour intervals until it is deemed ready for flattening.

An object which is properly humidified will be pliable and relaxed without feeling damp. Overhumidified paper will be limp and hard to handle; it can be flattened successfully, but will require more frequent blotter changes at the outset. Under-humidified paper will be stiff; to prevent cracking and breaking, additional humidification prior to flattening is mandatory.

Flattening

Once the object is relaxed by humidification it is flattened by drying in a planar configuration. This is accomplished by the use of blotting paper placed on both sides of the object and pressing with a flat sheet of heavy glass (with edges ground smooth) or board; additional weight on the top is desirable. If the work surface used for flattening is not smooth and even, a piece of board or glass should be used below the object as well as above.



The key to successful flattening is adequate pressure and blotter changes. In the flattening stage, the excess moisture required for relaxation is absorbed by the blotting papers. Damp blotters can cockle (ripple) and cause the object to cockle, thus defeating the purpose of flattening. Damp blotters are also conducive to mold growth.

For a properly humidified object the suggested intervals for blotter changes are:

1/2 hour
1 hour
1 hour
2 hour intervals until the object feels completely dry and has returned to its original rigidity

Some papers may require only two or three blotter changes until they feel done, while others may require five or six.

An over-humidified object will require more frequent changes:

15 minutes
15 minutes
1/2 hour
1/2 hour
1 hour
1 hour
2 hour intervals

After the object feels dry, it should be kept between blotters and under pressure for an additional five to ten days, depending on the thickness of the paper, to permit full removal of deep-set moisture. It is not necessary to change the blotters during this final drying period.

Materials and Equipment Required:

Humidification

Double Tray
- two trays of identical size
- masking tape
- plastic screening
- distilled water

Single Tray
- one tray, or wooden frame
- masking tape
- utility plastic (clear preferred)
- distilled water
- shallow dish or tin

Flattening

1/4" thick glass, or board — smooth with rounded edges
weights, or heavy, clean objects blotting paper:
acid-free blotter is recommended,
and etching blotters can be safely substituted.
DO NOT USE DESK BLOTTER

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APPENDIX F

POLYESTER ENCAPSULATION

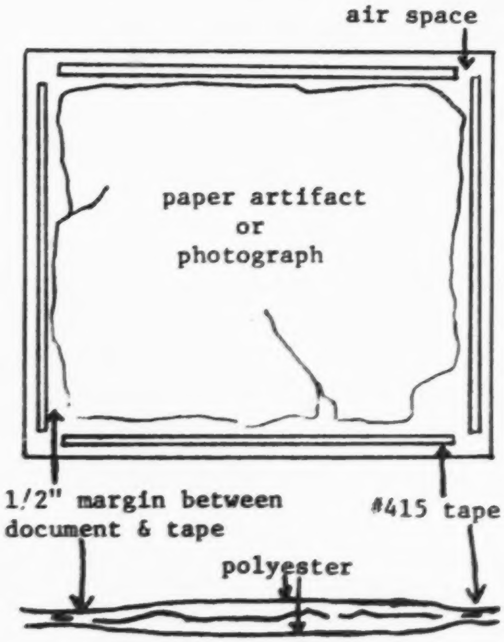
The purpose of encapsulation is two-fold: to protect the paper artifact from damages due to handling (tearing, soiling, etc.) and to create an individualized housing. The advantages of encapsulation over other protective systems, such as lamination, are numerous: the covering is polyester, the most stable plastic available; the object is held in place by static electricity — there is no need to subject it to heat or adhesives; in the event of damage to the plastic, the object can be removed easily and safely. There are two drawbacks to encapsulation. First, the static charge which holds the object is strong enough to remove pastel, charcoal and other powdery media from the object's surface. Second, there is a chance of entrapping moisture or pollutants inside. Objects with powdery design elements should never be encapsulated. Photographs, which are very sensitive to moisture, should only be partially encapsulated: two opposite sides should be left untaped.

Materials:
- 3 mil polyester (Mylar)
- 3M double coated tape No. 415
- scissors

Optional:
- squeegee or brayer
- weight, flat bottomed and
- clean lint free cloth

Procedure:

1. Cut two sheets of mylar measuring 1" larger on all sides than the item being encapsulated
2. Place one sheet of mylar on a clean, level work surface. Center the document on the mylar (secure the object with a clean weight).
3. Run strips of double sided tape on the mylar around the object at a distance of approximately 1/2" from the document. Leave the corners untaped for a distance of about 1/8" to 1/4" in order to create an air passage (remove the weight).
4. Place the second sheet of mylar over the document. Inspect the encapsulation for dirt and dust; if necessary, clean with the lint free cloth or cheesecloth.
5. Either weight the center of the encapsulation, or hold firmly with one hand. Carefully reach between the mylar sheets and remove the barrier paper from one of the tapes.
6. Press the mylars together firmly along the length of the exposed tape. Repeat this process for the remaining tapes.
7. Press firmly along the tapes once more to insure good adhesion. Working from the center of the encapsulation, press outward using hand, squeegee or brayer to expell as much entrapped air as possible.
8. Trim the margins of the encapsulation to within 1/4" of the tapes. If the document shows any signs of shifting within the finished encapsulation, rub the mylars on both sides with a cloth in order to increase the static charge.



APPENDIX G

HINGING
PHOTOGRAPHS AND PAPER ARTIFACTS FOR MATTING

Hinges are small tabs of paper used to join an object to the interior of the window mat. They are sparingly applied to the back of the object along the upper edge only. This system of attachment allows the object to hang freely and permits it to undergo necessary expansion and contraction without stress or distortion as environmental conditions change.

The choice of materials used for hinging is very important. Because the paper and adhesive are in intimate contact with the object, they must be of high quality, free from acids, sulfurs and other impurities which damage paper and photographic artifacts. The hinge must be strong yet easy to un-do or reverse.

The preferred materials are Japanese papers and cellulose pastes. Japanese papers have fewer additives than Western papers. The pulps are long fibered giving them great strength without bulk; when torn rather than cut, the paper edge is fringed with long feathery fibers, which can be used to advantage as a bevel. Two pastes are recommended for hinging. The preferred paste is wheat starch. This paste has been used for centuries and is known to be safe, stable and reversible; its drawbacks are complicated preparation and short shelf-life. Methyl cellulose is a synthetic paste with apparently good aging characteristics, but it has not been evaluated by actual experience over long periods of time; it is appreciably simpler to prepare than starch.

Materials required for Hinging

Japanese papers: hand-made Japanese papers of a variety of weights

Paste: wheat starch or methyl cellulose (see adhesives, Appendix C)

Barrier sheet: mylar, waxed paper or blotter

Blotting paper: acid-free is preferred. Etching blotter can be substituted — do not use colored and textured desk blotter

Flattening blocks: pieces of thick glass, plexiglas, or wood measuring approximately 3" square. Edges must be ground or rounded

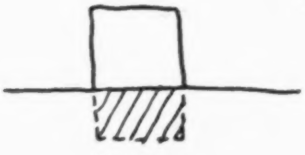
Weights: pieces of lead or other dense material; must be clean and manageable

Brushes: two watercolor brushes of moderate width, one for paste one for brushing out

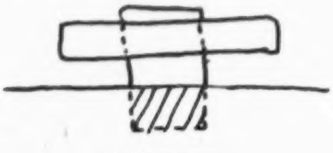
"Instant Hinges" are now marketed by Conservation Materials; these include Japanese paper pre-coated with wheat starch, polyester web for barrier sheet, and blotting paper.

Hinge Lay Out

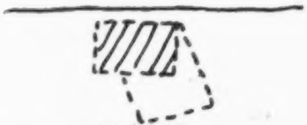
There are three basic hinge types.



Hanger



T-Hanger

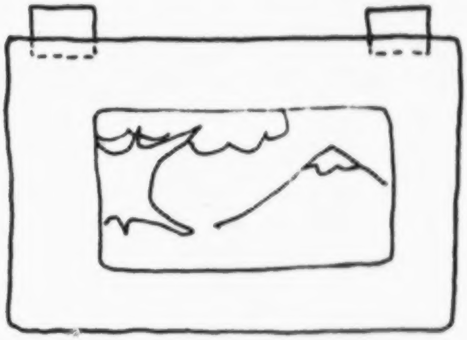


Folded

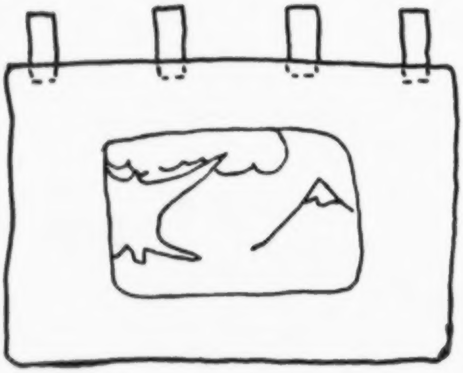
The hanger is used for most matting; the T-hanger is reinforced with a cross-strip for heavy objects. When an object is float-matted, the hinge is folded behind the object to hide it. The folded hinge is more difficult to apply and weaker than hanging hinges, and it should not be used for standard types of matting.

The number of hinges necessary to hold an object will be determined by hinge type as well as the size and weight of the object. To allow for maximum freedom of movement, the amount of total area covered by hinges should be kept to the minimum necessary for support. A few moderate size hinges is recommended, although some prefer to use a greater number of narrow hinges. Narrow hinges should always be placed vertically; broader hinges should be oriented according to the format of the object — horizontal for horizontal objects, vertical for vertical.

Japanese papers are available in a number of thicknesses. The paper selected for hinging should be about the same thickness as the object; if this is not possible, select a paper which is slightly thinner. A minimum of two hinges should be used, with these set near but not at the upper corners; even large objects can usually be adequately supported with three or four broad hinges. The size of the hinges will vary, but an average size would be 3/4" x 1 1/2". The paper is cut into hinges by tearing. This is facilitated by wetting of the paper along the line to be torn; if desired a straight edge can be used to guide the water brush.

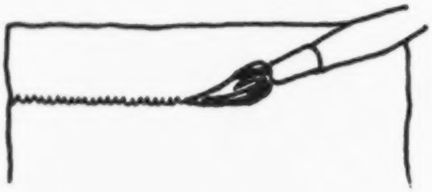


or

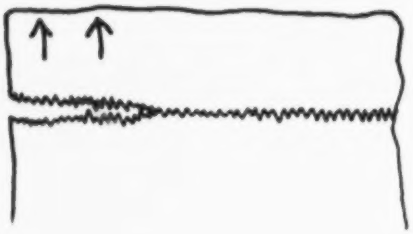


A WATER CUT IS MADE AS FOLLOWS:

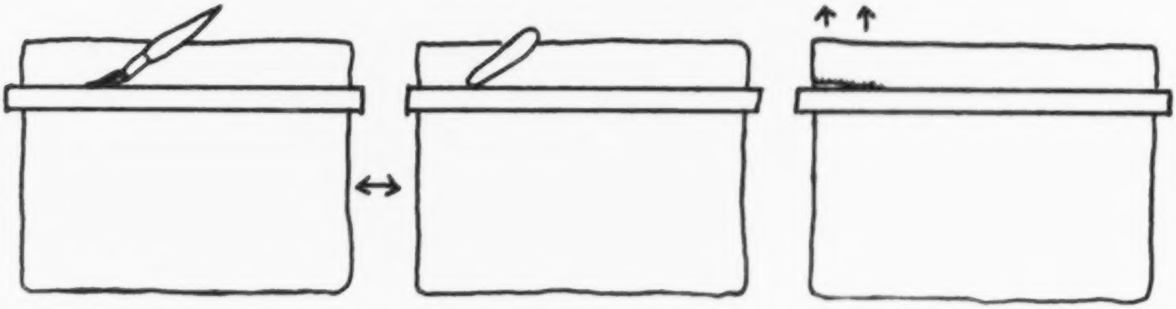
1. A thin line of water is brushed onto the Japanese papers, and is allowed to saturate the fibers.



2. The paper is held against the work surface with one hand. With the other, the unsecured side is carefully pulled outward. Pulling is done in a direction perpendicular to the cut without diagonal movement; pulling is done flat, with the torn portion in plane with the main body of the paper.

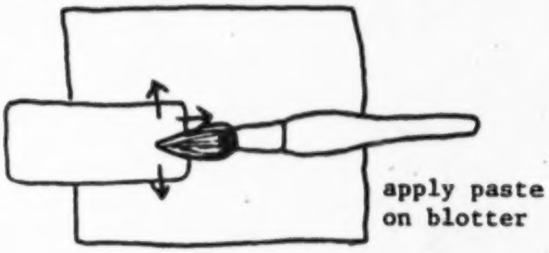


3. If desired, 6-10 sheets can be torn simultaneously. Use a straight edge to guide the water. After wetting, score along the line with a bone or bamboo folder; re-wet and re-score. Repeat
   bamboo folder; re-wet and re-score. Repeat
   these steps until the water has penetrated all thicknesses. Use the straight edge to hold the papers while pulling.

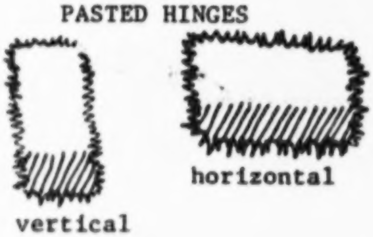


Attaching Hinges to Object

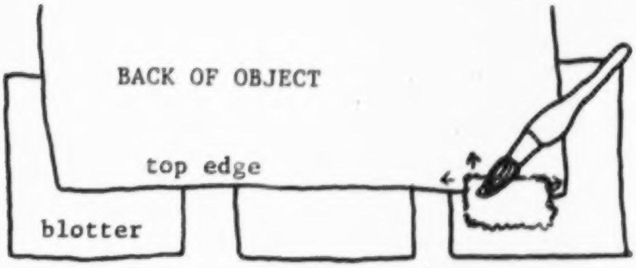
After the hinges are cut, place the object face-down on a clean surface, with the upper edge closest to you. Lay blotting paper underneath the upper edge of the paper.



On a separate piece of blotting paper, apply paste to the hinges. Paste only one-third of the hinge, working from the center of the area toward the edges; be careful to keep the edge fibers feathered outward.



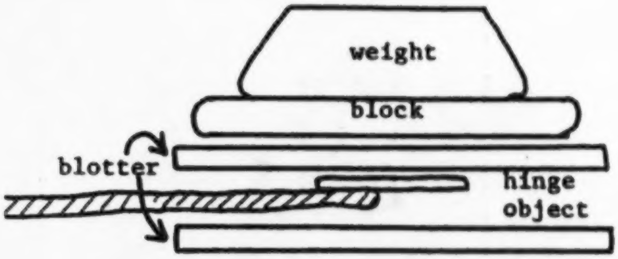
Let the hinge rest on the blotter for a moment to allow some of the paste's moisture to dry off into the blotter. Lift the hinge at the unpasted end; invert it and place it on the object. With the dry brush, lightly stroke the hinge into place, again working the edge fibers outward.



set hinge into place with
a dry brush

IMPORTANT: for hangers, place the pasted edge of the hinge even with the object's edge. For folded hinges, place the pasted edge of the hinge slightly below the object's edge.

Place another piece of blotting paper over the hinge. Set the flattening block on top, then the weight. After one minute, remove the weight and block and replace both blotters with fresh, dry ones. Continue to change the blotting paper and re-weight every few minutes until the paste and hinge are completely dry to the touch.

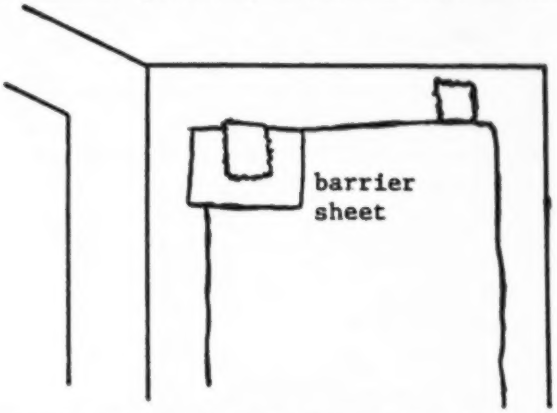


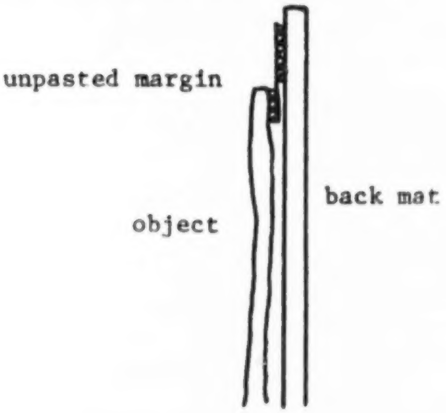
IMPORTANT: too infrequent blotter changes may cause the blotters to adhere to the hinge or object. Removing the blotters, blocks and weights prematurely may cause cockling and rippling of the object at the hinge areas.

Attaching the Object to the Mat

Open the window mat and set the object face-up on the backmat, in a close to center position. Close the window mat. With a clean pencil eraser, shift the object into its correct position relative to the window opening. Hold the object in place with a piece of blotting paper, block and weight set at the center. Open the window.

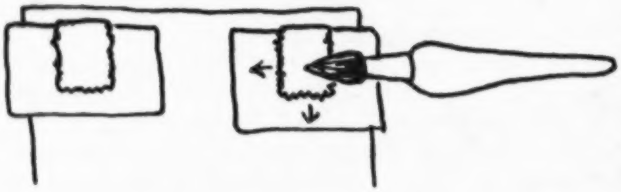
Hangers: Fold each hinge to the front of the object along its upper edge. Place barrier sheet between each hinge and the object. Paste the hinge in the manner previously described; leave a narrow strip of the hinge, near the upper edge of the object, unpasted. Flip the hinge up and secure in place on the back mat with the dry brush. Dry with blotters and weight as described. (it is not necessary to place blotters below the back mat).





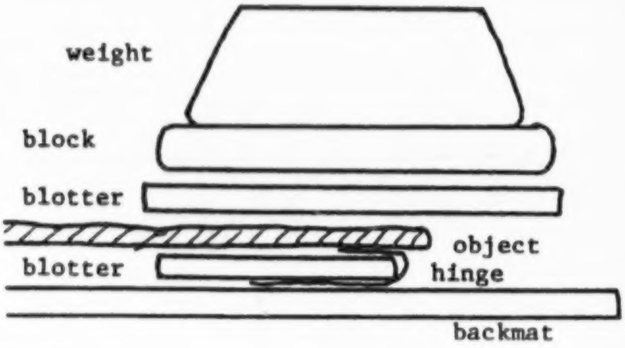
The T-strip is added after the hanger is dry. This is simply a long, narrow piece of Japanese paper applied over the upper end of the hinge. It is pasted and dried in the same manner as the hinge. It is possible to use gummed fabric tape for the T-strip if so desired.

Folded Hinges: After positioning the object and opening the window, mark the corners of the object onto the back mat with pencil. Remove the weight, et al., from the object. Turn the object over and fold the hinges down. Place a barrier sheet under the unattached portion of the hinge. Paste. Remove the barrier sheet.



Carefully set the object back into its marked position on the back mat. Gently lift the object and smooth down the wet hinges with a dry brush. Insert pieces of blotting paper inside, over the wet hinges. Drop the object back down. Place blotters, blocks and weights over the hinged areas and dry, changing blotters, in the manner described.

Unlike the hanging hinges, it is necessary to attach all folded hinges simultaneously to the back mat.



APPENDIX H

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MATTING

Matboards

There are four basic types of matboard, each with distinctly different aging properties.

The common type of matboard found in art supply stores and frame shops is made of a groundwood central core; the faces of the board are covered with higher quality paper, usually in colors, or with fabric. These boards can be distinguished by looking at the edge and seeing the multiple layers of clearly different paper types. Because of the ground-wood used at the center, these boards age rapidly and release both acids and peroxides. They are not recommended for use with paper, textile or photographic objects.

"Conservation" matboard or archival matboard is made from a purified wood pulp. These come in an increasing variety of colors; some have a single color throughout their thickness, while others have a different color on the outer face than is found at the body of the board. These matboards contain a chemical buffer which reduces the amount of acid released from the paper pulp. These boards are not recommended for use with textiles, photographs or better paper objects. They can be used for paper objects of lesser value.

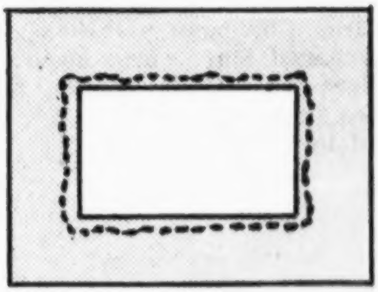
Ragboards are made from "rag" (cotton, linen) fibers. These boards are inherently more pure and more stable than others. Because of their greater purity and their near-neutrality, ragboards are recommended for use with all paper, textile and photographic objects. Most ragboards are the same color throughout. Their availability in local shops is often problematic, and special ordering may be required.

Buffered ragboard is produced by a number of manufacturers. While this is advantageous for many paper objects, the buffer is very bad for wool, silk, and most photographs.

Mat Lay-Out

There are two common window types: the standard window and the float mat. In the standard window, the mat comes over and covers the edges of the object; in the float mat, the window opening is larger than the object, creating an open margin around the piece. Either type can be made into a double or triple mat simply by placing additional windows above the first.

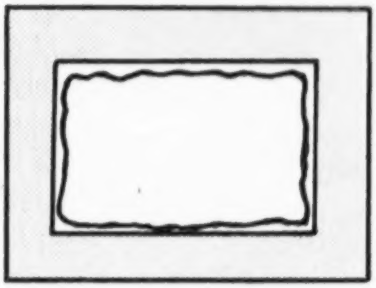
standard



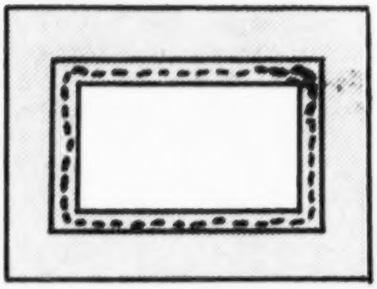
Measurements

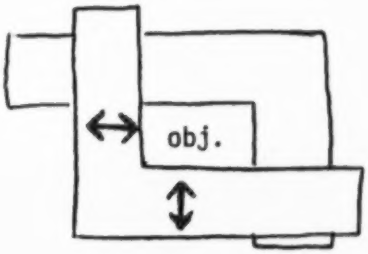
Begin by deciding how much area you would like to have revealed by the window; these dimensions will be the window measurements. If you have trouble visualizing the window size, cut two L-shape pieces from scrap matboard or cardboard and use them as facsimiles for the mat in order to test the format and size. Take exact measurements of the window size to the nearest 1/8".

float



double window



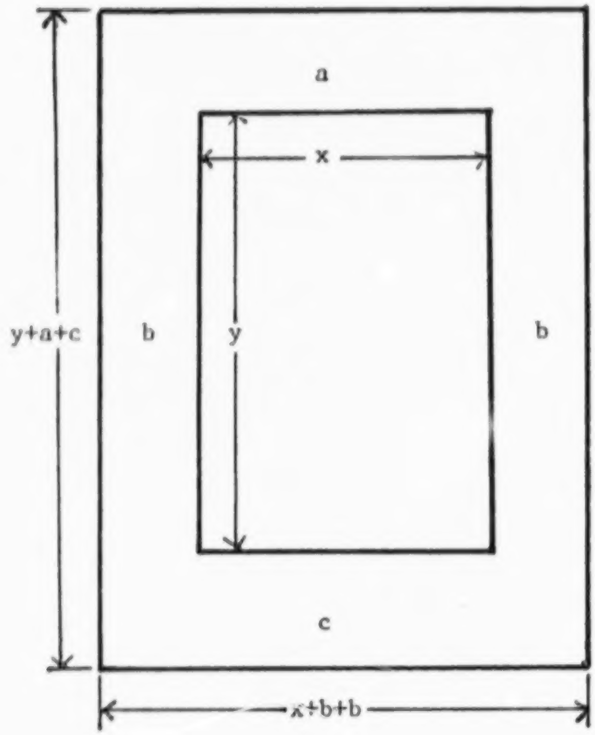


In setting the proportions of the mat margins there are only two "rules". The first is that the left and right sides should be the same. The second is that the bottom should be slightly larger than the top (2 1/4": 2", 3 1/2": 3", etc) to compensate for the fact that visual center is slightly above true center. Most mats are laid out with the top and sides the same size.

If the mat does not have to fit an existing frame, the margins can be determined arbitrarily by what appears pleasing. To determine frame dimensions, total the window and margin dimensions in each direction.

If there is an existing frame, the size of the margins will be determined by the window and the frame's inside (rabbet) dimensions. Begin by figuring the side margins: subtract the window size from the frame size, then divide the remainder by two. The top and bottom margins are less simple and will often require compromise; when possible, try to make the top margin the same as the sides without compromising the balance between top and bottom.

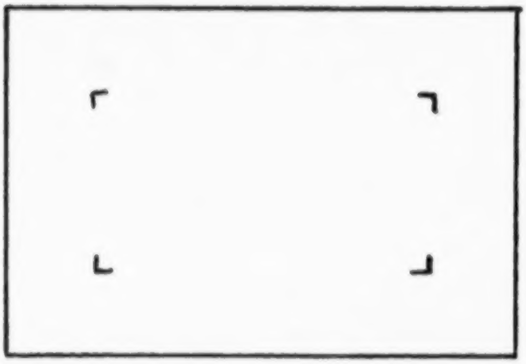
It is easy and often advantageous to make a sketch with measurements such as the one below. This will reduce confusion when figuring out the dimensions and when marking the mat.



Marking the Mat

Cut matboard to the outside dimensions before marking the window opening. Use a sharp No. 2 pencil to mark the window; these marks will be on the front of the mat, so be tidy and keep the lines minimal in size and darkness.

There are several methods commonly used for marking the dimensions. One is simply to mark measurements with a ruler. Some prefer to use a scribe or carpenter's angle. It is not necessary to mark the full length of the window cuts — marks at the corners of the window are sufficient. It is wise to double-check the window dimensions prior to cutting.

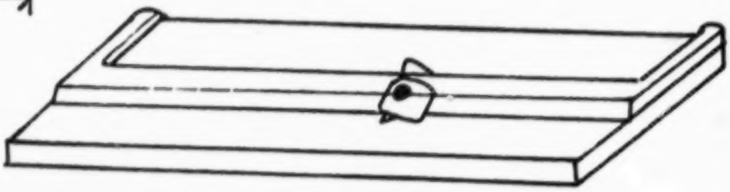


Mat Cutting by Machine

There are a number of sophisticated mat cutters on the market. The basic design is the same for all types:

The cutter consists of a pressed board base with a heavy straight edge attached to the top with hinges. Two cutting blades in spring-tension holders are attached to the straight edge — one blade makes a straight cut, the other a bevel cut. Fancier models come with a variety of "stops" and guides to insure proper alignment of the board inside the cutter.

Unless one does a lot of matcutting, the purchase of a cutter of this type is not an economical investment.



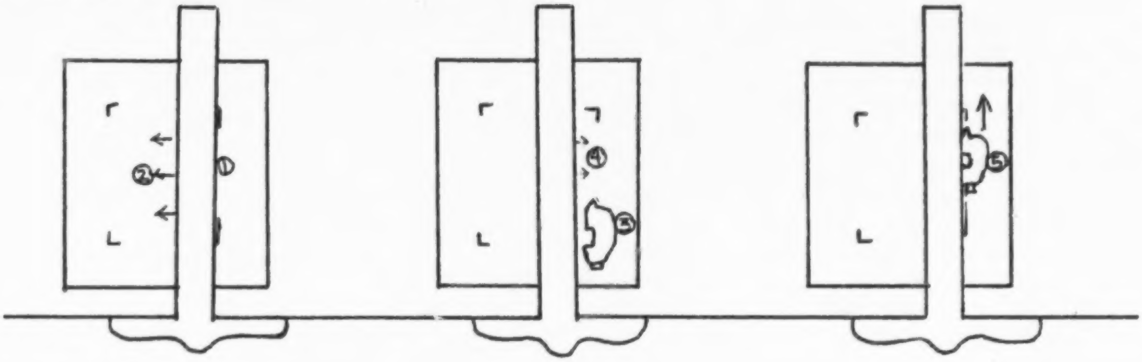
Mat Cutting by Hand

EQUIPMENT: strip of wasteboard; Draftsman's T-square; Dexter mat cutter; utility knife; (straight edge)

WORK AREA: a low table, preferably coming to mid or upper thigh height. The table should have a square profile along the edges of the top. Place the strip of wasteboard (either scrap matboard or non-corrugated cardboard) on the table for a cutting surface; place the short side of this board even with the table's edge and attach it firmly to the table with masking tape.

Outside Cuts

Cut two pieces of mat to proper outside dimensions; one will be used for the window mat, the other for the back mat. The outside cuts are made with a standard utility knife, using either a heavy straight edge or the T-square as a guide. Make these cuts to one side of the wasteboard, leaving the other portion of the cutting surface unmarred.



Window Cuts

Mark the window corners on one piece of matboard in the manner described above. Set the matboard, pencil marks up, on the wasteboard. The cuts are made at the right side each time, turning the mat between cuts. Place the matboard so that the cut will occur in the unused area of the wasteboard. Lay the T-square on top of the mat and press the edge of the square tight against the edge of the table, causing the extended arm of the square to lie perpendicular to the table edge. Keeping the square in place, line up the marks for the first cut with the right edge of the square's extension. Holding the mat firmly with the left hand, move the T-square approximately 1/2-1" to the left.

Gently set the cutter on the matboard with its blade tip on the corner mark at the lower right. Carefully push the blade in until the body of the cutter lies flat on the matboard (this push should be slightly toward the left as well as down, to follow the angle of the blade). Next, let go of the cutter and push the T-square back to the right until it gently nudges the cutter; the cutter should line itself up to the extension of the square.

Lean against the end of the T-square, using your legs to press it firmly against the edge of the table. Move the hand which has been holding the matboard in place to the far end of the square to hold it tight against the mat. With your right hand, push the cutter forward along the edge of the extension. Stop when the blade reaches the far corner mark. Push the square away and lift the cutter off the matboard.

Turn the matboard 90 degrees with the previous cut closest to your body, then repeat the cutting. Continue until all four sides are cut. Erase the pencil marks.

Notes Pertaining to Hand Cutting:

1. The wasteboard will become scored from cutting. If any of these marks are running at angles relative to the square, they may catch the blade of the cutter and send it off line. It is therefore important to keep the portion of the wasteboard used for the Dexter free of all random cuts.

2. The blade depth is adjustable by loosening the turnscrew at the back end of the cutter and moving the blade within its slot. Place the cutter on the edge of the matboard to be cut with the blade visible at the side in order to determine proper depth. The blade should extend very slightly past the thickness of the board. If there is a lot of drag when cutting, the blade is cutting too deeply and going into the wasteboard.

3. When setting the Dexter to the side between cuts, lay it on its side or top to prevent damage to the blade.

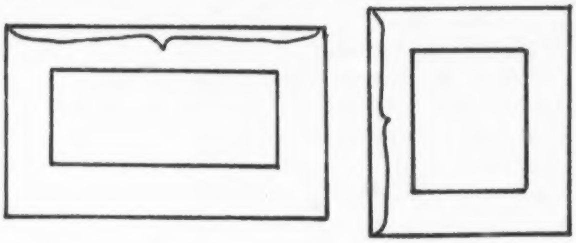
4. If you make a mistake with the cutter and a small wobble or errant cut results, it is usually easier to begin with a fresh mat than to correct the problem. It is nearly impossible to make a second parallel cut less than 1/4" away from the first

5. Small areas of a cut which are "fuzzy" can often be cleaned up with fine sandpaper or an emery board.

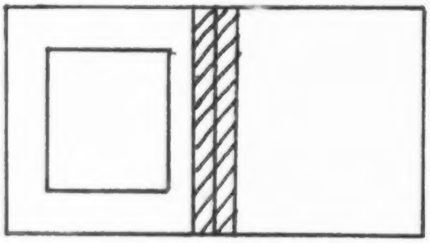
Assembly of the Mats and Artifact

Joining the Mats

The window mat should be attached to the backmat along one side prior to placing the object in the mats. This join should be made at a long side. In the museum world (where objects are stored in mats, unframed) the two mats are joined at the left or the top, never on the other sides.



The join is made on the inside of the mats using tape. Gummed fabric tape is recommended, although other gummed tapes may be used; do NOT use any kind of pressure-sensitive tape ("scotch" tape, masking tape, etc.) for this join.



Attaching the Object

There are three basic rules in attaching the artifact to the mats. These are very important to the well being of the object and they should be followed ALWAYS:

1. The method used for attachment should be able to be easily undone without damage to the object. There are a number of methods which will be discussed later. Never use pressure-sensitive tapes for attachment—they cause severe damage to artifacts and after a few years they will be difficult, if not impossible, to remove safely.

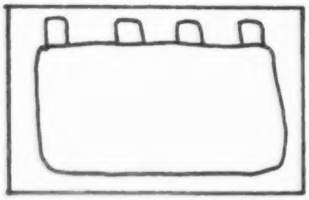
2. The method used for attachment must not restrain the object. Papers, photographs and textiles expand and contract with changes in temperature and relative humidity. The edges must be able to make these adjustments as well as the center of the object; if the object is restrained only in part, stresses will develop which will cause buckling and, in fragile objects, tearing.

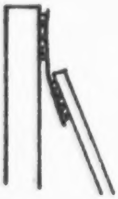
3. The object should be attached to the backmat only, never the window. This allows a person to lift the window and see the entire object without carrying the object, flapping in the air, along with the window mat.

Methods of Attachment

Hinges

Small strips of long-fibered Japanese paper ("rice" paper) attached with paste are used to hold the upper edge of the artifact to the backmat. The hinges are attached to the back of the object first; the upper end of the hinge is then attached to the backmat.

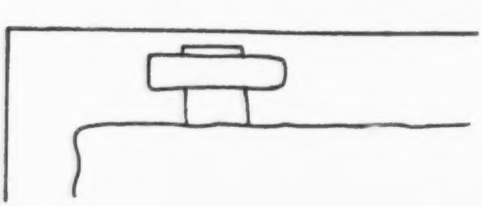




When properly pasted, there should be a small area of the hinge, just above the object, which is left unattached to either mat or object. This "free" area takes the stress of unequal expansion/contraction (both mats and objects make these dimensional changes, but do so at different rates), and it also serves as an easy place for detachment by a simple cut.

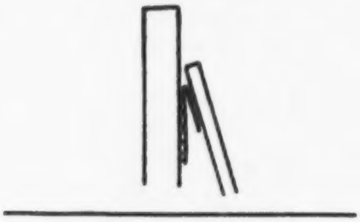
Methyl cellulose is the easiest paste to use. Apply it very sparingly and cover the pasted and assembled areas with clean blotting paper and flat weight while drying. Change the blotters every few minutes until the paste and papers are thoroughly dry.

Variations on Hinging: for heavy objects, some re-enforce the hinge at the mat by attaching a second strip of paper across the first. This is called a T-hinge.



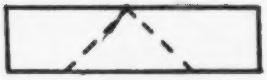
The second common variation is the folded or hidden hinge, which must be used in a float mat.

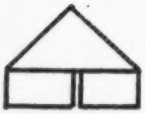
Hinges are the preferred method of attachment for paper objects and most photographs.



Corners

For heavier objects, such as mounted photographs, folded corners may be used. These corners will be visible on the front and are often inappropriate for items being floated in the mat. Commercial photo corners should not be used — they are made of poor quality paper and will eventually damage the object. Make corners from strips of 100% rag paper (check art supply stores); the size of the corners will vary by the weight and size of the object.





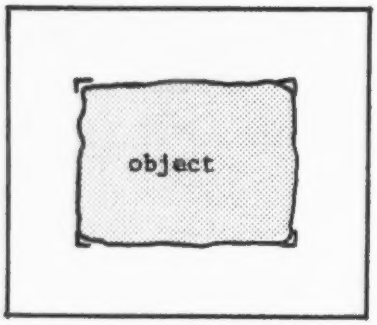
After making the corners, place the object in the mats and get it properly aligned. Carefully open the window mat. Mark the corners of the object on the backmat with pencil, then set the object aside.

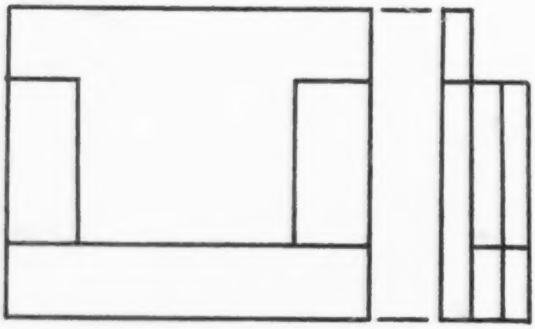
The lower corners are attached to the backmat with PVA emulsion glue, such as Jade or Elmers. If the object is flexible, the upper corners can be attached also. After the glue is thoroughly dry, place the object in the corners. Re-enforce the corner pieces with strips of gummed tape. If the upper corners are not already attached to the backmat, slide the corners over the corners of the object and secure them with the gummed tape — do not use glue on these.

Variations on Matting

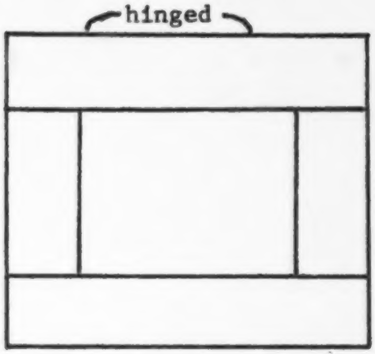
Sink Mats

Sink mats are used for objects which are extremely thick, heavy or warped. The principle is to build up the depth of the mats to accommodate the object. To make a sink mat, start by lining up the object between the backmat and window mat (DO NOT JOIN THE TWO MATS). Remove the window, and mark the location of the object on the backmat with pencil. Set the object aside. Cut matboard to fit the margins remaining at bottom sides and top of the object; this is easiest to accomplish using simple strips of matboard. Attach the side and bottom strips to the backmat using a PVA emulsion glue (such as Elmers) or double sided tape (3-M type No. 415). Continue to build up the strips until they reach or just exceed the depth of the artifact.

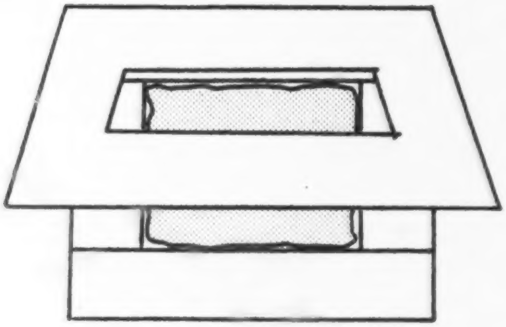




Join the strips for the top margin to each other, then attach this thick strip to the upper edge of the back mat with gummed tape. Finally, attach the window mat to the top strip or to the left hand side.



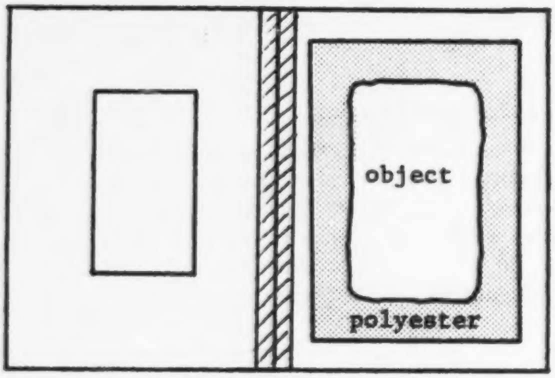
If the fit is good, it is not necessary to attach the artifact within the mat. If, however, the artifact is slightly thinner than the sink, or it is extremely heavy or warped, it is advisable to hinge the object to the backmat. The hinged top strip should be flipped up out of the way when putting the artifact in or out of the mat.

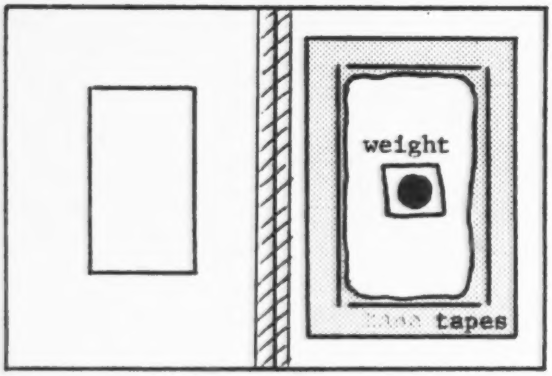


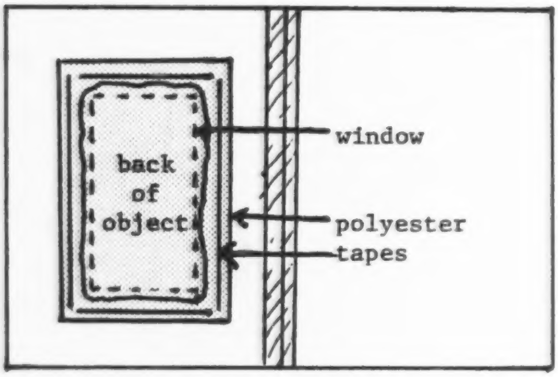
Sling Mat

For temporary exhibit or flat storage ONLY, one can use a sling mat; because of the pressure sensitive tape used close to the artifact, this is an unsound procedure for objects which will be vertical for an extended period of time. The sling mat can only be used when the object is strong and reasonably rigid, and when the window mat overlaps the edges of the object by at least 3/16" on all sides.

The two mats are cut and joined in the normal manner. With the mats open, a sheet of 5 mil polyester (Mylar is one trademark) larger than the object is laid on the backmat. Set the object face-up on the polyester and close the window mat. Line up the object then put a weight on top to prevent shifting. Open the window. Run a strip of double sided tape (3-M type No. 415) on the polyester, approximately 1/8" away from the edges of the object. Remove the barrier paper from the tape and close the window, pressing tightly to attach the window mat to the tape. Remove the weight. Open the mat again. Rub firmly over the tapes to insure attachment; trim the polyester if there is a great deal of excess.







APPENDIX I

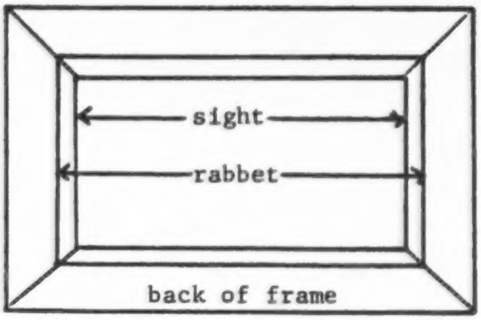
FRAMING OF PAPER ARTIFACTS

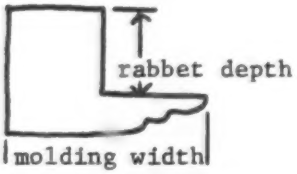
The Purpose of Framing

The purpose of framing is primarily two-fold: aesthetic display of the object, and also protection of the object on exhibit. In a very real sense, framing creates a micro-environment around the object, therefore the choice of materials and techniques used will be critical to the preservation of the piece.

Framing must serve as a seal against dust, dirt, spills, etc; give sturdy support to the object; allow the object and mats to expand and contract freely. Framing must not impart damage to the object by pressing the paper or print against the glazing or against the wood of the frame itself; framing must not provide a source of acids or other deteriorants.

Determination of Frame Dimensions:





rabbet dimensions are used
when discussing frame size

New Frames

In choosing a new frame, the internal dimensions of the rabbet should be at least 1/8" larger than the dimensions of the object to be framed to allow for expansion. Wooden frames should be at least 3/4" larger than the object to allow for space between the edges of the paper and the wooden surface. All unfinished surfaces of wooden frames should be varnished to reduce the migration of acids from the wood.

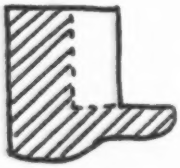
Old Frames

It is often desirable to re-use an original frame. Generally this is feasible, however, do be prepared to make some alterations to the frame.

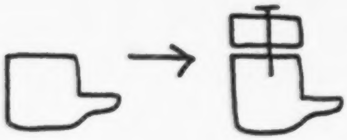
If the frame is properly proportioned to accept the matted object, then it will simply need cleaning. All interior and exterior surfaces should be free of dust, dirt, irregularities and splinters. Old paper on the back (previous dust seals) must be removed. Warm water followed by scraping is generally the easiest way to clear the paper and glue. Do not economize on the cleaning step — tiny splinters of wood and bits of dirt will haunt you later on.

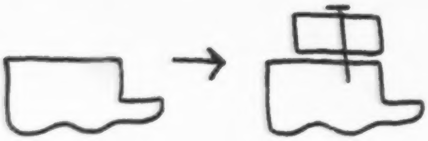
Very often the frame's rabbet will be the same dimensions as the object. To provide a buffer space between the edges of the paper and the inside of the frame, it is necessary to enlarge the rabbet opening. If the frame molding is broad, the rabbet should be enlarged by 1/4" on all sides; for narrow moldings, enlarge the rabbet as much as possible without sacrificing the structural strength of the frame.

Large modifications can be done with a router. There is also a rabbet plane on the market which makes enlargement relatively simple (frame wholesalers or Brookstone). If worse comes to worse, the rabbet can be shaved away with a utility knife; if this method is chosen, do a little bit at a time and be sure to wear some form of eye protection.



Many older frames were not designed to accept mats and are too shallow as a consequence. When mats come flush to the back of the frame, one can sneak by with the use of turn buttons to secure the piece in the frame. The better method, which must be used when mats extend beyond the frame, is to deepen the rabbet. The sides of the frame are extended by the addition of wooden strips, attached at the back with wood glue and brads. On narrow moldings, the sides of the extension should be made flush with the sides of the frame; on wide moldings, the extension can be narrower, allowing the sides to be set away from the sides of the frame and consequently to be less conspicuous. The outer edges of the extension should be finished off to be visually compatible with the remainder of the frame.





The Glazing

GLASS is the most common glazing material used in frames. While glass does filter out far ultraviolet wavelengths of light, it does not protect the object from near ultraviolet.

ACRYLIC sheets, such as plexiglas, may be desirable for very large objects where the weight of the glass is prohibitive; it may also be desirable for objects which will travel. Acrylics have poor filtering properties. Acrylics are also prone to developing strong electrostatic charges on their surfaces, therefore they should not be used for objects with loose or powdery media such as pastels.

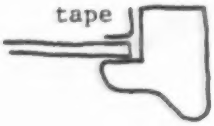
UV FILTERING ACRYLIC sheets are produced which contain ultraviolet light absorbing materials (Rohm and Haas UF-3 or UF-4 plexiglas). Generally these plastics also remove some visible violet light, and they will have a slight yellow cast. These are the recommended glazing material for objects which are extremely susceptible to ultraviolet degradation — watercolors, albumen prints, and so on.

Placing the Matted Object in the Frame

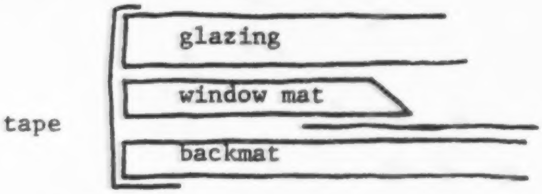
Establishing Dust Seal at Front

There are two primary methods of establishing a forward dust seal. Both methods utilize a pressure sensitive tape; mylar backed tape is recommended, although a good quality tape such as "magic tape" is acceptable.

In the first method, tape is used to seal the gap between the glazing and the frame rabbet. Some apply the tape to the edges of the glass, fold the tape back on itself, and then drop the glass into the frame. Others put the glass into the frame, and then apply the tape. Either method will work; both are finicky and require some patience. After sealing, place the matted object into the frame.



In the second method, the tape is used to seal the glazing to the back mat. This is considerably easier to accomplish than the first method, however, it places the tape's adhesive, rather than its plastic backing, toward the object. This method should not be used if the edges of the object lie less than 1 1/2"-2" from the edge of the mat. To make this seal, place the glass over the matted object. Attach the tape on the upper face of the glass, and then wrap the tape to the back. Double-check the glass, mat and object for entrapped dirt before sealing.



Cleaning Between Glass and Matted Object

If you have been meticulous in your technique, if the work area is immaculate, and if you are lucky, there will be no lint, hairs or other junk between the glazing and the mat or object. (Acrylic glazing and old frames are particularly prone to dirt problems). It is important to recognize and remove foreign particles before finishing up. If there is a lot of junk inside, then the glazing and object must be separated fully and everything must be brushed off or recleaned.

If there are just a few errant spots and they are near the edge, then their removal can sometimes be accomplished locally. Begin by placing a rolled piece of masking tape at the end of a narrow strip of matboard. Gently separate the mat and glazing at the problem area, insert the matboard and catch the dirt on the tape. This technique is especially useful with acrylic glazing which tends to attract incredible amounts of new junk each time it is handled.

Securing the Object in the Frame

Metal Frames

Spring clips are provided to hold the object securely in place within the frame. These clips are notorious for rusting quickly. Avoid their use. Instead, snug up the object with additional matboards or other acid-free boards.

Before making the final closing of the frame, carefully turn the framed piece right side up and check once more for dirt and the like.

Wooden Frames

Once everything is in place, add an additional piece or two of matboard to the back for extra support and rigidity. The matted object is usually held in the frame with metal pins driven into the wood. Glazier's points (flat triangular or diamond shaped wedges) are commonly used — these may work loose in time and are not recommended. Common brads tend to rust quickly and therefore should be avoided. Stainless steel brads or brass escutcheon pins (available in woodworking specialty stores, and occasionally hardware stores) are recommended. Even if one frames only occasionally, the purchase of a framing or fitting tool is recommended.

Depending on the size of the piece, place one or two brads on each side. Carefully turn the frame over and check for dirt and shifting of the mats. If everything looks good, finish setting the brads. Brads should be placed at intervals of approximately 2" to 3" depending on the overall size of the object.

Finishing

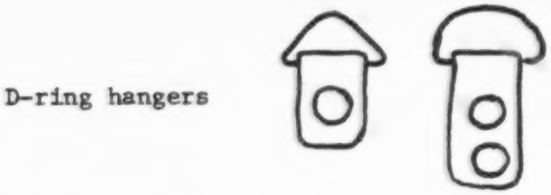
Reverse Dust Seal

It is difficult to apply a dust seal to the reverse of a metal frame. If the environment makes such a seal necessary, the best method is to apply tape from the inner edge of the metal to the back board.

Wooden frames are traditionally sealed with Kraft paper; while this paper is of less than archival quality, it is adequate for this purpose. The dust seal is attached to the wood at the back of the frame. Gummed paper tape, glue or double sided tape can all be used. Be careful to see that moisture or adhesive does not ooze into the rabbet of the frame. For smaller frames, Permalife paper is recommended as a dust seal; because of its extreme reactivity to moisture, the only easy way to attach Permalife is with double sided tape.

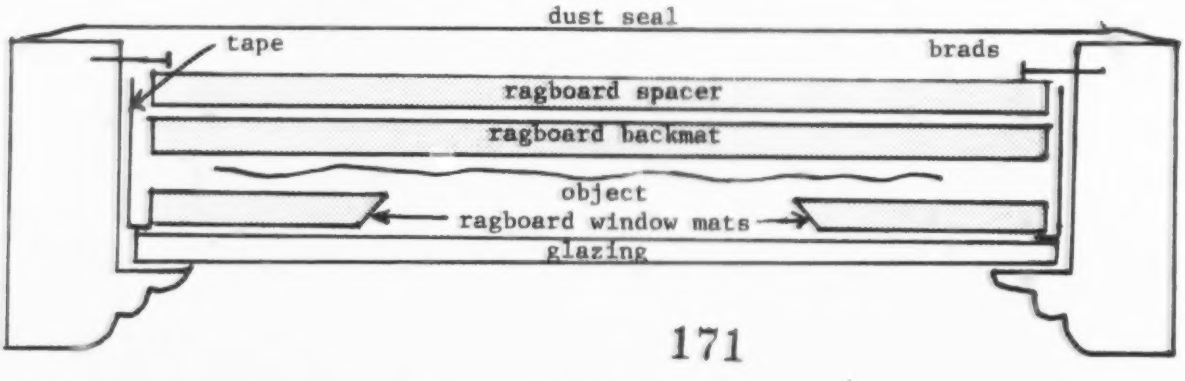
Hangers

For wooden frames there are two basis hanger types available — the screweye and the D-ring. Generally D-ring hangers are stronger and distribute stress better.



It is recommended that a framed object be hung directly off the hangers, from two points. This gives added security should a hanger pull free from the frame or a hook pull free from the wall.

If wire is used then it should be attached during the process of putting on the D-rings. Put one screw into each D-ring (use the upper hole of the larger 2-hole hangers); do not tighten. Attach the wire to the rings, then pull upward on the wire at the center to simulate the hanging position — this will pivot the hangers slightly. Tighten the screws with the hangers in final position. Install the second screws in larger hangers.



Appendix 4

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Compiled by Betty J. Belanus

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